

Bavarian News

Vol. 5, Nr. 11 U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch June 3, 2009

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GRADUATION
The first Department of Defense Dependents Schools-Europe 2009 high school graduation ceremonies will be held tomorrow in Ansbach and Bamberg with numerous ceremonies to follow throughout Europe.

The Bavarian News staff would like to wish all graduates the best of the luck in their future endeavors.

Photos of graduating seniors can be found on the following pages:

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For the latest community news, visit www.grafenwoehr.army.mil

Graf Commissary takes best overseas store title

by **BLAIR BENZ**
Special to the Bavarian News

The Grafenwoehr Commissary took top honors in 2009, winning the Defense Commissary Agency's Dan Daniel Award for Best Large Commissary Overseas.

Store Director, Jimmy Holzhauser, attributes the win to excellent customer service, "We try to go out of our way to help our customers," he said. "Many customers have husbands who are deployed and we try to help any way we can."

Open less than two years, Grafenwoehr competed against 42 other overseas stores for the award.

Judged on accountability, unit cost, sales, and customer service survey, Grafenwoehr earned a 4.85 out of a possible five points for customer service.

"We didn't win this award because of one person," said Holzhauser, "it takes a team, and I think we have the best team."

Customer service accounts for only one quarter of the award criteria. Stores must demonstrate rigorous inventory controls, positive sales growth, and maintain or decrease the previous year's average operating cost.

To put it simply, the award "includes more than the customer sees when they shop. It also includes the behind the scenes operations and the books- both financial and inventory," said Holzhauser.

That is no small task considering the Grafenwoehr Commissary stocks more than 10,000 American products and receives fresh produce and grocery items from all over Europe.

Holzhauser plans to display the award as soon as it

arrives from the U.S.

"We are going to put it out front on a table with a sign that says 'this award belongs to you, the customer' because without the support of the customer, there is no commissary," he said.

The Dan Daniel Award for Best Large Commissary Overseas honors Congressman Dan Daniel of Virginia who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1968 to 1988.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, Daniel championed efforts to improve benefits for military service members and their families.

This legacy of support for service members and the military community continues to thrive at the Grafenwoehr Commissary.

ADVENTURE

Spaces available for Camp A.R.M.Y. Challenge



Photo by Ray Johnson

Participants in last year's Installation Management Command-Europe's Camp A.R.M.Y. Challenge canoe down a river during the outdoor recreation portion of a sports and fitness camp. The week-long camp, designed for children of deployed servicemembers, will be held this year from June 15-20.

IMCOM-Europe Press Release

Children of deployed service-members in Europe can still apply for residential summer camps filled with specialized instruction ranging from culinary classes, soccer, track and field, and basketball.

Camp A.R.M.Y. Challenge is designed specifically for teens and middle-school children and is hosted by Installation Management Command-Europe Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

Camp A.R.M.Y. Challenge - the acronym stands for Adventure, Resilience, Memories, Youth - is set for June 15-20 and offers not only a welcome break from the family stresses of deployment, but also "provides a perfect venue for kids to have fun and learn at the same time," said Joe Marton, Child, Youth and School Services program specialist for IMCOM-Europe.

And the program aims to build social skills, Marton added, "that can used for a lifetime."

Middle-school and high-school students currently in grades 6-12 whose active-duty parents have deployed or will be deploying between June 1, 2008, and March 1, 2010, are eligible to apply.

Although the camp is hosted exclusively by IMCOM-Europe Child, Youth and School Services, the camp will have some spaces open to children

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BEST OF THE BEST

IMCOM-Europe names top NCO, Soldier

by **TOM SAUNDERS**
IMCOM-E Public Affairs

A military policeman from Stuttgart and a chaplain's assistant from Heidelberg were recognized as the best of the best during the Installation Management Command-Europe 2009 Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year awards ceremony May 28 at Campbell Barracks here.

Staff Sgt. Ronald White, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart, and Spc. Jason Boatwright, U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg, were named as the command's top NCO and Soldier, respectively, during the ceremony which also paid tribute to the Army's 2009 Year of the NCO by adopting the theme: "Year of the NCO - Leading by Example."

"This type of competition helps you keep that competitive edge and shows how com-

mitted you are," said Diane Devens, IMCOM-Europe region director, to the group of 13 NCO and Soldier competitors.

This year's event provided numerous trivia factoids:

- Both winners are California natives, with White hailing from Stockton and Boatwright from Madera;
- This is the third-straight year USAG Stuttgart claimed the NCO title with Staff Sgt. Edmund Whipple winning in 2008, and Staff Sgt. Christopher Allison winning in 2007;
- Both winners cited this year's theme - Leading by Example - as something their home station leaders and NCOs do every day.

"On a day-to-day basis, NCOs are the driving force behind the Army. My NCOs were behind me every step of the way," said White. "They pushed me in every capacity

possible, but they were with me every step of the way."

Referring to the three days of actual competition at USAG Grafenwoehr, Germany, earlier this month, White said, "During the competition's road march, my sponsors both did the road march with me."

Twelve miles carrying a heavy ruck sack, he emphasized.

White's NCOs, Whipple and Master Sgt. Gary Cryder, were matter-of-fact about "leading by example."

They both agreed that being with their fellow Soldier is what NCOs and Soldiers do.

"We had the easy part," said Cryder shucking off White's praise about the role he and Whipple played in leading by example.

"We just had to give him a piece of paper and tell him what to do. He did the hard part and competed."

Boatwright thanked his previous and current NCOs and leaders, saying, "With my NCOs it's not just about work. They have an interest in my life and family and well being. They don't just 'push' me in a direction, they lead me in the right direction. They have laid out for me what I need to do to be successful."

White and Boatwright also both commented on the camaraderie displayed among NCOs and Soldiers during the competition.

Boatwright thanked his USAG Heidelberg leadership then thanked the other competitors who he said "lifted each other up" and encouraged each other throughout the competition despite trying to out-do each other.

Watching on during the ceremony was Boatwright's wife, Victoria, and his 13-month-old

See LEADING Page 25

SOUND OFF

OHA survey ensures accurate housing rates

Staff Report

Officials with the Department of Defense's Defense Travel Management Office are asking overseas servicemembers in Germany who live in privately leased housing and receive Overseas Housing Allowance to take part in its annual OHA Utility and Move-in Expenses Survey.

The survey, which is designed to collect information on utility, recurring maintenance and move-in expenses, is used to keep the OHA rates for overseas areas up-to-date.

Survey-takers will need records and receipts that reflect actual housing expenses on hand when taking the survey. The survey is available through at www.defensetravel.dod.mil/oha/survey/utilitymiha.html.

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



Living in Europe allows *you* to step back in time, celebrate U.S. Army history

June is a very special month for the Army. Not only do we recognize the Army's 234th Birthday on June 14, but Saturday is the 65th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France.

This 234th birthday commemorates America's Army – Soldiers, families and civilians – who are achieving a level of excellence that is truly Army Strong both here and abroad. Their willingness to sacrifice to build a better future for others and to preserve our way of life is without a doubt, the strength of our nation.

We will celebrate the Army Birthday June 11 at the Grafenwoehr Dining Facility beginning at 11:30



a.m. with the traditional cutting of the Army Birthday cake. The DFAC will also have a special meal, so please try to join us at this special event and celebrate 234 years of Army Strong.

The events of June 6, 1944, define Army Strong. The fate of the world changed when Allied Forces stormed the beaches of Normandy. The scales were tilted against the Axis for good and World War II was soon over.

Being stationed in Germany gives you the unique opportunity to stand in the very spot where this pivotal battle was waged, remembering its importance to France - and the world. The historical sites in Europe offer a

once-in-a lifetime experience.

In addition to seeing the historical sites, I encourage you to make use of our Armed Forces Recreation and garrison lodging facilities, such as those in Garmisch, Camp Darby, etc.

These centers are located in beautiful locations and offer affordable vacations and activities for all age groups.

There is no excuse for not seeing the beauty of Europe. Locally, there are also numerous places to visit and the people of Oberpfalz (upper Bavaria) enthusiastically welcome Americans into their communities.

See the video on our Web site, www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

While summer is a time for vacationing, it is also a busy time here at the garrison.

We bid farewell to the Joint

Multinational Training Command's Commanding General Brig. Gen. David Hogg on the afternoon of June 9. As senior commander, he oversaw the Grafenwoehr Training Area during the past two years of pivotal transformation. His leadership was instrumental in our becoming Europe's premier installation to live, work and train.

I bid him a fond farewell and thank him for all he has done for the Army and Grafenwoehr.

JMTC Chief of Staff Col. Tim Touzinsky also departs this month. We appreciate the significant contributions he made here. He has been key to our success and I wish him the best as he leaves for his new assignment.

This time of year is the most active for PCSing and Changes of

Command. We will continue to see a turnover with many 2SCR Soldiers and their family members departing and arriving. We also welcomed a new 69th Signal Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Earl S. Nakata. The 69th Signal Battalion provides our communications/information technology support for the garrison.

Like so many offices, they are absolutely critical to our mission, but aren't always recognized because people take for granted the services that are always there.

Great history, outstanding leaders – Army Strong!

*Col. Chris Sorenson
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

“Reference groups” influence desires, overspending



JACEY ECKHART
On the Homefront

My husband's commanding officer drove a Mercedes SL convertible. OK, it wasn't exactly fresh off the lot, not even on an 06's salary. But it was a sweet ride just the same. The fact that the CO himself looked like Tom-Cruise-circa-Top-Gun was a really good thing, too. The whole package meant that Brad could see himself behind the wheel of a Mercedes later in his career. It meant I could see myself making out with some hot old guy in a uniform. Gave a girl cause to hope.

That is, I thought it gave a girl cause to hope. Instead, I just found out that old man's car is probably the source of my husband's mega car note. That old man's car (or something just like it) could be the source of your military family's overspending, too. This week I got to talking

to Ronald T. Wilcox author of “Whatever Happened to Thrift: Why Americans Don't Save and What to Do About It.” Wilcox is a Professor of Business Administration at the University of Virginia. He also consults with Navy Federal.

According to Wilcox, we military folks may have an extra niggles when it comes to the way we spend our money. Like every other American, we each have what marketers call a “reference group.” This is the group of people who give us spoken and unspoken messages about the kind of goods that are appropriate for us to consume. Reference groups are the things that make your little girl want her birthday party at Build-A-Bear workshop just like the rest of the first grade. Reference groups are the things that make your teen ashamed of his cheezmo cell phone. Reference groups make you really want to mow the lawn.

Which is fine. But it turns out that we military folks might be a little more susceptible to our reference group than our civilian counterparts. Like civilians, our reference groups are made up of our siblings, our neighbors, our friends. Unlike civilians, however, we also have a reference group made up of every person in the unit, every sailor on the ship, every individual in a military uniform

in the country.

“The key is that if my next door neighbor buys something expensive, there is always some uncertainty about sources of income,” explained Wilcox. “But in the military, everybody knows down to the dollar how much you are bringing in. That desire to have what someone just like you has increased.”

That means that every time you or your service member walks through the parking lot, past the line of Suzukis, Yamahas and ... is that a 2009 Moriwaki MD250H?? His or her brain has picked up thousands of messages about what kind of vehicle is appropriate for their rank. The message gets picked up twice a day, every day - whether you can afford it or not.

“When someone (at your rank or below) consumes something like a new sport motorcycle. It seems eminently reasonable that you should get one too,” Wilcox said.

What makes this even more costly to those of us in the military is that we can't even rely on our brains to pick up the whole message. Wilcox points out that we notice the things we like more than things that are not interesting to us. Our brains only like to remember the new BMW, the red convertible, the megatruck, the sexy sportsbike. Our brains take no notice of the

fleet of 89' Honda Accords with the rusted tail pipes and missing fenders. Our brains are blind to minivans.

You would think that just knowing our susceptibility to the message of our military reference group would make each of us more cautious about our spending. More careful. More logical. More skeptical. Probably not.

“I don't think you are going to combat it. I don't think peoples brains are gonna change. Education is held out as panacea, but I don't think it is going to change this,” said Wilcox. “You and I are still going to have trouble.”

But trouble is something we military folks can deal with. We're used to it.

We adapt. We overcome. So I hope that if you are one of those chicks married to a thrill seeker who just has to have that sportbike because “everyone” who just came back from Iraq bought one, I hope I'll see you at the base actually counting brands and bikes. I hope you'll see me there, too. I'll be making a survey of the actual numbers of convertibles in the parking lot ... and the number of hot old guys still in uniform who look anything like Tom Cruise.

Eckhart is a nationally syndicated columnist with www.cinchose.com. You can reach her at jacey87@mac.com.

Community volunteers make Best Yard competition a success

Editorial and photo by
GLORIA MIKE
Grafenwoehr DPW

The concept of Best Yard is not new, but it hasn't been done in the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Garrisons in a long time.

Declaring house as the Area's Best Yard is our way of acknowledging the residents' hard work. It lets them know that we appreciate them going above and beyond just regular maintenance and really helping to improve the appearance of their neighborhoods.

A lot of the off-post government housing areas in Grafenwoehr and Vilseck are interwoven with our German neighbors. It's very important that we show our respect for the Host Nation and show our pride as Soldiers and family members by presenting our homes and lawns in the best manner possible.

This year we held our first contest the week following Spring Clean Up.

Judging was done May 15 - 17 in 27 different housing areas. Volunteer judges inspected the areas to find

beautiful yards that showed care and pride. Members of the garrison leadership, May 20, posted 22 Best Yard signs and gave each resident a certificate of appreciation from Col. Sorenson and a garrison coin.

All the winners were very happy and pleased to have their hard work acknowledged.

The judges chose the winning yards as the best in their area at the time of inspection. I hope this spring's contest and the publicity surrounding it will make the residents more aware of the event so that next time everyone that wants to participate is ready on the day that the judging is being done.

For the Spring Best Yard Contest, I had a lot of wonderful Soldier and civilian volunteers step up to be judges.

But my favorite group of judges were the student body members from Vilseck High School.

No one says it better than a child, and these kids had a lot to say. They had the chance to really explore the Vilseck housing areas and see how people's individual habits and manners

affect the entire community.

They saw how the actions and attitudes of each resident can either improve or degrade a neighborhood.

I believe the students came away with a sense of understanding of how individual yard appearance affects neighborhoods and how they can become good citizens in their communities.

I want to thank Duane Werner and Sgt. 1st Class Robert Cheney for allowing me to bring this project to VHS.

I want to thank Mr. Kevin Anglim, his high school art classes, Paul Crane and the Netzaberg Middle School Student Council members for making the signs that were posted around both Grafenwoehr and Vilseck.

By getting students involved in these projects, they have shown them that they are a part of the community and not just students and dependents.

I also want to thank Aretta Zitta and the members of Club Beyond for being judges.

Other volunteer judges were Sgt. Stith, Karen Collins, 1st Sgt. McCann,



A team of eight Vilseck High School student volunteer judges gather to discuss the Spring Best Yard competition.

Peggy Figueroa, Jennifer Reeder, Wendy Howe, Dara Aguigui, Pennie Stallworth, Tiffany Hudgins and Jaye Bakalars.

Everyone did a great job and had fun!

View pictures of the winning yards at www.flickr.com/photos/

usaggrafenwoehr. We are not sure how often we will have the Area Best Yard Contest and I would appreciate the community's input on this.

If you have any recommendations or suggestions, please contact me at gloria.mike@eur.army.mil.

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

Producer: **MILCOM Advertising Agency**
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Internet: **www.milcom.de**

Bavarian News is an unofficial biweekly publication authorized by AR 360-1. Editorial views are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. The paper is an offset publication prepared and edited by the U.S. Army Garrison-Grafenwoehr Public Affairs Office. Bavarian News is printed by Werbeagentur und Verlag Roswitha Lehner and distributed every other Wednesday. Circulation is 10,000 copies. Submissions are welcome. Send letters to the editor and commentaries to PAO, Unit 28130, Attn: Bavarian News, APO AE 09114, or e-mail them to usaggrafenwoehr@graf.eur.army.mil. Telephone the Bavarian News at 475-7113 or fax to 475-7935 with story ideas and events.

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Blackhawk Soldiers remembered as influential comrades, good men

Story and photo by
MELISSA WOLFF
Assistant Editor

Members of the Grafenwoehr community gathered in somber silence on May 21 at the Grafenwoehr Post Chapel to remember the lives of Staff Sgt. Christian E. Bueno-Galdos, 25, and Spc. Michael E. Yates, 19, of Headquarters and Headquarters company, Task Force 3-66 Armor, 172nd In. Bde. Both Soldiers lost their lives at the hands of a fellow servicemenber, at a shooting at Camp Liberty, Iraq May 11. The unusual circumstances of the deaths added a sense of gravity to the ceremony.

1st Lt. William Archer, commander of 3-66 Armor rear detachment, read the words spoken by Capt. Kevin Bukowski at the memorial ceremony at Forward Operating Base Hammer, who spoke positively of both Soldiers.

He remembered Buenos saying, “With a smile that was too big for his head,” Bukowski joked, “and that ugly pink shoulder strap holster that was too big for his body, Sgt. Buenos was one of my go-to guys in the company whenever I needed something done and done right.”

“One of the things that we loved about Staff Sgt. Bueno was the way he treated everyone like a human being,” said Staff Sgt. Maurice Thompson, 3-66 rear detachment, reading the words

spoken by Sgt. Joel Celona during the service at FOB Hammer. “His infectious personality made it impossible for him to have enemies and was the glue that kept Headquarters platoon functioning like a family.”

Yates was also well-liked within the company. Staff Sgt. Yager, 3-66 rear detachment, read the words of Spc. Johnathan Roman, saying, “I loved Yates like a brother. He was my driver, and you really get to know a person being stuck in a vehicle together for hours at a time day after day ... he had many friends in the platoon and was well-liked throughout the task force.

“He was never without a wise crack to make us laugh, whether it be to an Noncommissioned Officer or to one of his peers, it didn’t matter to him. It was just Yates being Yates.”

In his closing thoughts, Roman wrote, “I would like to thank God for the time we got to share with Yates. I know that being around him for the time we had enriched our lives and his presence will be sorely missed. We’ll see you again at Fiddler’s Green, Yates. Keep a place for your platoon.”

Lt. Col. Eric Stetson, rear detachment commander of 172nd In. Bde., read the words spoken by Lt. Col. Louis Rago II, commander of 3-66 Armor at the memorial ceremony May 16 at FOB Hammer, Iraq.

“The sorrow and pain we share with

their families is real and made even more acute by the tragic circumstances of their death. Losing soldiers in battle is ... difficult and painful ... but, losing comrades in a manner in which we have lost Christian and Michael is far more difficult to understand. Many of us are filled with anger ... it is confusing and very hard to accept, but accept it we must,” read Stetson.

All of the speakers encouraged listeners to remember both men as the warriors they were. “We cherish the memories of the son, the brother, the father, and the friend,” Rago wrote.

“It’s back to doing what we do best. And Sgt. Buenos and Spc. Yates wouldn’t have it any other way,” read Archer.

Bueno, born in Arrequipa, Peru and raised in Paterson, N.J., joined the U.S. Army Reserves in 2002 and entered active duty in 2004.

He is survived by his wife, Greisyn Bueno, his mother Candy and his father, Carlos.

Yates, of Baltimore, Md., joined the U.S. Army in 2007.

He is survived by his son Kamren, his mother Shawna and his father Richard.

Sgt. Christian Bueno-Galdos and Spc. Michael Yates were remembered May 21 at the Grafenwoehr Post Chapel.



Grafenwoehr BOSS wins big for single Soldiers

by **ANGELICA MEDINA**
Special to the Bavarian News

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers presidents and representatives for various U.S. Army installations throughout the Installation Management Command-Europe region gathered in Heidelberg during a week-long conference April 26 - May 2.

The subjects of the conference included dealing with the unique issues concerning single Soldiers, ways to improve the BOSS program to make it more appealing and conferring of several awards, in which U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr walked away with two: best large installation with a single soldier population over 2,000 and best event from a large installation with a single soldier population over 2,000.

USAG Grafenwoehr gained the title of best large installation in part from a video created by BOSS members highlighting the quality of life at the garrison.

Criteria for the best installation award were

We support the single Soldier through quality of life, community service and recreation.

Cpl. Robert Shomper
BOSS President U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr

judged by best looking and most improved installations.

USAG Grafenwoehr’s recent expansion in construction projects and beautification including larger shopping facilities and construction of new barracks buildings weighed into the win. The garrison has the intention to bring single soldiers and married- but-geographically-separated Soldiers closer to the “1+1” ideal. This means one soldier to one room, as part of the Army Family Covenant for quality housing.

The award for best event for a large installation recognized an August 2008 rafting trip to Austria that the club organized.

BOSS, however, does more than provide

excursions to single Soldiers, “We support the single Soldier through quality of life, community service, and recreation,” said USAG Grafenwoehr BOSS president Cpl. Robert Shomper.

Any Soldier can report a quality of life issue to BOSS, who then will notify Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios directly. One quality of life issue brought to BOSS’s attention that is in the process of resolution is the installation of screens in barracks windows.

BOSS also encourages community service, not only from single soldiers, but any community member who wants to make a difference.

“We are trying to encourage more people to volunteer, so we keep track of volunteer hours

and want to recognize volunteers. The Army has a Volunteer Medal we would like to start giving away. It’s a medal that is rarely seen and difficult to get, and it takes more than just volunteering for a couple of hours,” Shomper said.

BOSS is currently looking for volunteers for Netzaberg Middle School’s first annual Field Day on Friday.

BOSS is most widely known for their recreation and events. Shomper hopes that in the future they will be able to issue a BOSS membership card that will be recognized by venues such as the on-post bowling alley to bring discounts to card-holders.

USAG Grafenwoehr BOSS also hopes to hold more activities in Europe outside Germany to locations such as Italy. They will be hosting many activities in the upcoming months.

To learn more about upcoming Grafenwoehr BOSS activities, contact Shomper at DSN 475-8822, CIV 09641-83-8822 or e-mail him at bobby.shomper@eur.army.mil.

Kontakt Club rakes in awards, brings community together

by **AMY NEWCOMB**
Bavarian News

U.S. Army Europe announced the winners for the annual Outreach Kontakt Awards May 13. Kontakt, a German-American friendship organization, won many awards in Vilseck and Grafenwoehr. Both groups and individuals who made exceptional contributions to the German-American Friendship Outreach Program, were honored.

The Kontakt Vilseck club won two of the 14 Group High Achievement Awards throughout Germany. The club won the Group and District Development Award and the Special Programs at a Community with Military Presence Award for volunteering a total of 11,960 hours in 2008.

These awards are in recognition for support of “welcome home celebrations” and helping Family

Readiness Groups get barracks rooms ready for Soldiers returning home from deployment.

Peggy Lovelady of Vilseck was individually recognized for volunteering 1,020 hours in 2008 with the Volunteer Award for a Community with Military Presence. This is the equivalent of a Volunteer of the Year Award for Kontakt.

Individual High Achievement Awards will be awarded to Markus Meissner, Patrick Kelly, Sgt. 1st Class John Lovelady, Spc. Samuel Ramos, Hans-Martin Schertl, 1st Sgt. James Joyner, Anton Engelhardt, Christian Köppel, Jürgen Ullrich, Karl Winkler, and Maria Popp who are all members of the Vilseck Kontakt Club.

“These are people who did something special ... One of our persons, Mr. Winkler is the boss of the brewery here in Vilseck, he donated a lot of

items for the Christmas tree lighting in Vilseck like Kinder gluwien, kinder punch, stuff like that, for free,” Daniel König, President of Vilseck Kontakt Club said.

“Sgt. 1st Class Lovelady, he was deployed but he tried to get the Kontakt Club in touch with (2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment) ... We sent about 160 care packages to Iraq and we sent them through his APO and he distributed them to commanders and squadrons.”

Grafenwoehr Kontakt Club High Achievement Award winners are Birgit and James Joyce, Elfriede Schinner and Lothar Gogolka.

Individuals who are not members of the Outreach Kontakt Clubs in Vilseck and Grafenwoehr will also be awarded with the Outstanding Civilian Service Awards for helping the Kontakt Clubs in various capacities.

Those individuals are Jochen Lobenhofer and Andreas Kohl, both from Vilseck.

König feels strongly about bringing the local German community and American residents closer together.

“The Kontakt Clubs in Graf and Vilseck are U.S. Army sponsored programs for getting both cultures together and giving the Americans living near the area an opportunity to meet local people and make local

friends,” König said.

Vilseck Kontakt Club meets at the Vilseck Library on the second floor every Friday at 1900.

Members and non-members gather to play pool, throw darts or sit together and visit. Kontakt Vilseck also uses the club house to plan activities like barbecues, trips around the local area and dining outs to enjoy the local cuisine.

“We try to share the culture as best as we can,” König said.

Grafenwoehr Kontakt Club is located in Bldg. 108. The club meets every Wednesday at 7 p.m.

The Kontakt Clubs for both Vilseck and Grafenwoehr raise money every year at the German-American Volksfest in Grafenwoehr which is their largest fundraising project throughout the year.

These funds are used to gather items into care packages for deployed soldiers, take group trips, and participate in dining outs.

Upcoming events for Vilseck Kontakt Club for June involve a group trip to the Tropical Island water park in Berlin.

For July or August Kontakt Vilseck is planning a Sommerfest at Big Mike field on Rose Barracks in Vilseck.

“You don’t have to be a member to

participate in the activities or events we have, everyone is allowed to come over and to hang out with us,” König said.

The Kontakt Program was originally founded in 1969 by U.S. Army Europe and the German Department for Youth and Families and hoped to bring the youth of both nations together in friendship.

In 1979, Vilseck founded their Kontakt Program in support of the local community to deepen the friendship between U.S. Soldiers, their families and local German citizens.

In 2005, units from 3rd Brigade moved back to the U.S. and Kontakt Vilseck suffered heavy losses from American members which caused the program to register as a local German club.

With the arrival of 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment troops to U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr in 2006 the club was once again able to gain American membership and to date has 170 members.

The Award ceremony held to honor groups and individuals who made exceptional contributions to the German-American Friendship Outreach Program will commence in Nuremberg on July 25.

For more, visit www.kontakt-vilseck.de.

“The Kontakt Clubs in Graf and Vilseck are ... programs for getting both cultures together ... We try to share the culture as best we can.”

Daniel Koenig
Vilseck Kontakt Club President



Hohenfels High School



Aaron Helbling



Alicia Moczynski



Alissa Grantham



Amanda Shenk



Angela Reinick



Caio Araujo Roper



Courtney Borg



Daniel Darnall



David Chapa



Emily Elliott



Emily Mittag



Heaven Sanders



James Robinson



John Leon



Johnnie Mesch



Julia Nwoga



Justin Battley



Kayleb Harp



Kimberly Howard



Lacy Wells



Loisann DeLass



Lucas Salerno



Max Maupin



Sabrina Collins



Samantha Oberlin



Shawn Havens



Stephanie Larumbe



Tatiana Patterson



Thomas Welch



Tiffany Bright

Bamberg Middle High School



Liz Addison



William Alexander



Julian Ardley



Crystal Baker



Rebecca Bausum



Andrea Bell



Amanda Biggins



Arianna Boatwright



Brittany Boozer



Jhana Bradley



Jocelyn Bright-Smith



Kevin Brown



Anthony Buchanan



Josten Buen



Jabb Bumanglag



Olivia Caba



Trevor Calahan



Melissa Carr



Sebastian Castaneda



Tessarose Cepe



David Cormier



Analeise Crum



Sierra Davis



Roberautrice Eddie



Sofia Engel



DeLaRentae Evans



Andreas Foster



Selina Godbee



Giovanni Gordon



Lamar Harvey



LeSean Harvey



Aaron Hernandez



Dijon Holland



Angela Hughes



Rebecca Hunter



Francis Johnson



Jewell Johnson



Dominik Jones



Frederic Kips



Lydia Klein



Jaleesa Knuckles



Elisabeth Lambes



David Martinez



Brooke Mecillas



Francine Mendiola



Ryan Morris



Vincent Nwafor



Joshua Robinson



Melissa Ross



Zachary Russell



Chantel Sellers



Patrick Smith



Zachary Tipton



Adamaris Vazquez



Justin Webb



Caleb Wills



Danielle Witter

Congratulations
Graduates!

Ansbach High School



Marcus Allen



Christian Boodoosingh



Raul Bracero Molina



Jeffrey Brice



Brittany Bruchhauser



Amber Castle



Steven Crane



Larissa Deikun



Tyler Dignan



Katherine Dillon



Matthias Dolph



Marissa Dominguez



Lindsey Griffith



Jarrad Jones



Freddie Johnson



Samantha Johnson



Carmen Hill



Alex Marshall



Teal Podraza



Haley Reeder



Amandine Martin



Kacy Coleman



Jessie Henderson



Bruno Mizerani



Kassia Kosteinik



Kevin Page



Jaqueline Pohl



Tatiana Patterson



Jordon Shack



Amanda Nagies



Donovan Purdum



Giancarlo Rosario



Viary Quinones



Vigil Brandon



Aminata Sesay



David Strosnider



Heidi Shelvock



Joshua Simpson



Kevin Stadler



Elizabeth Walters



Danica Vitoria



Stirling Teal



Maggie Edens



Alizbeth Figueroa



Michael Freas



Samuel Freeman



Zachary Giles



Isaiah Gomez



Briana Harvey



Kristin Hemker



Joshlyn Learn



Dion Rogers



Stephanie Stinson



Timothy Shuvon

Munich International School



Christopher Byrne



Michael Clarke



Kevin Durr



Christian Harrison



Kelly Hodges



Chelsea Michta



Sara Micka



James Reed



Jeramey Sattler



Lauren Steinman



Jocelyn Unzicker



Miles Wert



*Congratulations
Graduates!*

Military working dogs welcomed to community, demonstrate skills

by Staff Sgt. JERAME STOFFER
USAG Garmisch DES

What intimidates people yet at the same time intrigues them most about the Military Police?

The answer is a four-legged cop, aka a Military Working Dog.

Two of the newest members of the Garmisch community are MWD “sergeants” Fons and RRubio, MWDs serving with the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Directorate of Emergency Services.

The dogs and their handlers have

been training since they arrived in Garmisch and conducted the first demonstration of their skills for the students and faculty of Garmisch Elementary-Middle School May 8.

The demonstration included an obedience course, contraband detection and everyone’s favorite, the bite suit.

To all MWDs, training or working is playtime and if they alert to hidden contraband they know they’ll receive a reward.

That means Fons and Rubio always try hard to succeed, as they want that reward, usually a favorite toy, at the end.

Their humans are Staff Sgt. James E. Tolley, Garmisch Kennel Noncommissioned Officer in Charge and Sgt. Michael S. Chambers, a recent graduate of K-9 School.

To become a dog handler, MP candidates must be proficient in their occupational specialty, as well as have an aptitude for working with dogs.

“There is an unwritten law that a MWD is one rank higher than his handler. This is because if a handler neglects his dog, the Army can get them for disrespect to a senior,” explained Tolley.

“MWD’s can receive awards, too. It depends on the unit you are assigned to; some commanders don’t want to give a MWD an award because they are dogs. My dog has a few certificates of appreciation and he earned his combat spurs in Iraq while we were attached to a (cavalry) unit.

“MWDs should not be treated like pets,” said Tolley. “They are trained to attack with or without command, so people should not approach a MWD, especially from behind or the side.”

MWDs are trained to attack with the use of a special padded suit. The dogs recognize the suit and charge after the “assailant.”

Kindergarten teacher Jamie Wert experienced what it felt like to be taken down by Fons during the school demonstration.

“They asked for volunteers (over 18 years) and I raised my hand,” said Wert. “I have never been afraid of dogs, so I entered into the demonstration without fear.”

Wert said the protective suit was so thick that she could barely move, much less run away from the dog.

“I expected the dog to grab my



Courtesy photo

Military Working Dog, RRubio gracefully sails over an obstacle for Staff Sgt. James Tolley at the Garmisch WMD training area during a demonstration of his skills.

arm and to be aggressive if I resisted. I was completely stunned when the dog jumped on my back and knocked me to the ground,” said Wert.

“I was unable to move, but knew that the suit and dog handlers would keep me from harm.”

Like her kindergarten students, Wert was very impressed with the dog’s strength, speed and obedience to Tolley.

“I hope that the dog doesn’t remember me at the entrance gate as the one he took to the ground at the school!” Wert said.

“I would advise my students to be

very cautious when they are around working dogs.

“These animals are not like their dogs at home and are skillfully trained to do certain jobs. I’d say keep to yourself and let the dogs do their jobs,” Wert said.

Working with a non-human battle buddy has its benefits.

“I prefer working with a dog over people,” Tolley admitted. “While I am at work most of my day is spent training Fons, so I basically get paid to play with dogs all day. I also have to deal with soldier issues as well, but that’s expected of an NCO.”



Courtesy photo

Garmisch Kindergarten teacher Jamie Wert gets take down by Army working dog, RRubio, during a demonstration for Garmisch Elementary-Middle School students May 7.

Emergency services join forces, battle ‘explosion’

by German Army Capt. CHRISTIAN PLATSCHEK
NATO School PAO

A security exercise took place May 15 at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization School in Oberammergau, Germany.

The general scenario encompassed a security incident at the NATO School facilities. The exercise began with a simulated explosion which led to a fire within one of the School’s main academic buildings. To add realism to the simulated fires, the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Fire Department used smoke machines within the academic building.

Further adding more realism, several NATO School staff members posed as casualties.

Once the exercise was underway, POND Security Guards and the Oberammergau Police and Fire Department responded to the NATO

Emergency services join forces, battle explosion School incident location.

The fire fighters quickly set up their equipment, which included numerous fire trucks and emergency rescue vehicles. At the same time the “fire” was being extinguished, the fire fighters evacuated the injured to a Bavarian Red Cross casualty collection area. The Red Cross emergency personnel treated simulated injuries ranging from severe burns to back injuries and evacuated one casualty to a local hospital.

Overall, the Security Exercise was an enormous success for all of those involved. The exercise’s success was directly attributed to the coordinated efforts of host nation first responders, POND Security Guards and the USAG Garmisch and the NATO School staffs.

Lessons learned in the exercise will be implemented to meet any future exercises or any real world contingencies. The NATO School is a tenant unit of USAG Garmisch.



Firefighters exit the NATO School main academic building May 15.

Let’s hear it *fore* our volunteer!



Photo by John Reese

Emcee Kari Sharpe (left) joins the applause as Host Nation Liaison Andrea Winter (center) presents Inge Wörndle with a volunteer award at the 2009 U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon held May 20 at the Pete Burke Community Center.

A perennial volunteer for the annual Commander’s Cup German-American Golf Tournament held in July at the garrison’s Alpentel Golf Course, Wörndle first began working with Americans in 1947.

She worked a sports broadcaster in Garmisch-Partenkirchen during the 1936 Olympics.

The garrison honored her for her decades of volunteer work for the community.

Boy Scout volunteers receive top awards, allow limitless opportunities for participants

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Though anyone who has been involved with Boy Scouts can probably say they have been camping at least a few times, the boys from Boy Scouts of America Troop 303 from Hohenfels can say they have been camping all over Europe, from France to Switzerland to Germany.

Though Boy Scouts is well known for building leadership skills in boys of all ages, those in Troop 303 will have the opportunity to hone those skills on an international level this summer when they attend Intercamp Holland with more than 2500 Scouts from 10 countries.

And though Ray Arbogast, assistant scoutmaster, said theirs is truly a “boy-led” troop, none of those things would be possible without the time and dedication of the organization’s adult volunteers.

Eight of those volunteers earned awards at a banquet May 14 for the Edelweiss District which spans from Garmisch to Prague to Berlin and encompasses approximately 30 troops including those at the larger military communities of U.S. Army Garrison Franconia and USAG Grafenwoehr.

Lt. Col. Yancy Wood, Eagle Scout and Troop 303 scoutmaster, was named Scoutmaster of the Year.

“I got the credit for an active troop,” he said. “There are a bunch of leaders that were busy making Boy Scouts what it is supposed to be. The boys earned lots of merit badges, we had a lot of boys make rank and we went camping every month.”

Wood said five Scouts, a few of them only 11- or 12-years-old, earned the biking merit badge last fall, one of the most difficult badges



Left to right: Ray Arbogast, assistant scoutmaster, teaches William Hammer and Nicholas Volk how to tie a square knot.

in Scouting, that required five 10-mile, two 25-mile, and one 50-mile ride.

Their final ride began in Amberg and ended in Regensburg, taking them more than seven hours to complete.

Sonja Vass, who currently serves as a unit commissioner in Hohenfels and is a member of the Edelweiss District Training Team, received

the District Award of Merit, one of only two awarded in the Transatlantic Council, for rendering volunteer service of an outstanding nature over a period of eight years both in Scouting and in other organizations.

Steven Vass received the Distinguished Commissioner Service Award for five years of service as the unit commissioner in the Hohenfels

area.

Arbogast earned the district’s Service to Youth award. Despite the active adult volunteers, Arbogast said the boys deserve a lot of the credit for a successful troop.

Older boys are designated as patrol leaders who plan the troop’s goals for the year at yearly meetings, then break each month into goals and themes and plan events accordingly.

For example, he said, it was the patrol leaders’ idea to go camping once every month and with successful planning they followed through on that goal.

Older Scouts also act as mentors for younger ones. At their first meeting after crossing over from Cub Scouts into Boy Scouts, Will Karafa, senior patrol leader and a 15-year-old freshman at Hohenfels High School, showed the new boys around the lodge to help them get acquainted with their new digs and learn the routine.

Joshua Cooper, a 17-year-old junior who just made Eagle Scout, said he enjoys mentoring the younger boys toward that goal.

“That’s the best part for me right now, to help them see it’s achievable. We’re all striving for that same goal,” he said, adding, “and the camping too. That’s always fun.”

Lt. Col. Derek Cooper, Karen Cooper, and Sgt. 1st Class Shelby Hartfield, an assistant scoutmaster who is also an Eagle Scout, all received the district’s Certificate of Appreciation for their part in supporting troop events.

Cyndi Hartfield received the coveted Spark Plug Award for going the extra mile in volunteering for the Scout program.

“They said it’s for being so energetic in everything I do,” Hartfield said. “This is good for the kids, what Scouts means and what’s behind it. They are learning skills they will use forever - life skills, not just camping skills.”

Celebration honors diverse cultural traditions

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Speeches, dancing and lots of eating took place in the Zone May 14 when the Joint Multinational Readiness Center and U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels celebrated Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with a full house of Soldiers, civilians and family members.

One of the many Equal Opportunity observances throughout the year, Asian Pacific Heritage Month celebrates an incredibly diverse group of people in an already diverse Army.

The “Asian/Pacific American” designation encompasses more than 50 ethnic or language groups including native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

According to the Army, there are more than 28 Asian and 19 Pacific Island subgroups in the United States today representing a vast array of languages and cultures.

Because many people from those cultures choose to serve in the U.S. military, the Army designates one month each year to recognize their contributions to the Armed Forces and the country.

Command Sgt. Maj. Micheal Clowser spoke about the contributions Asian/Pacific Islanders have made to the Army not just with their acts of patriotism and heroism, which are many, but also in laying the foundation for the military we know today.

“Although Asian Americans, black Americans and many others were discriminated against in World War II, I believe it was their courage, honor and performance that helped pave the way for the integration of the Armed Services, the dissolving of ethnic specific units and ultimately the elimination of the Women’s Army Corps in 1978,” said Clowser.

The beginning of the event featured a slideshow presentation of service members of Asian or Pacific Island descent who have received awards for their heroism.

“We have a long tradition of serving America,” Clowser said.

“I think it adds to our (military) culture - it has caused us to change to how we are now.”

After Clowser’s remarks, attendees were invited to sample the huge array of traditional Asian/Pacific Island food prepared by event volunteers.

Displays highlighting individual cultures within Asia and the Pacific

Islands were spread throughout the Zone’s foyer.

Following lunch attendees were treated to the gathering’s main event.

Small children, teenagers, men and women demonstrated traditional dances for the audience.

Each dance had a different meaning, purpose and place of origin.

Men pounded their chests and stomped their feet in war dances, young girls swayed their arms in the different graceful dances of the Pacific Islands.

Sgt. 1st Class Cristita Bufford said she hopes the audience gained from the performance an understanding of how many different cultures are included in this large umbrella group.

“I like to show people in the community what our heritage is,” she said.

“There are different countries within Asia—it’s not just China and Japan. There are so many different cultures.”

“I’m an Islander and I would like to teach everyone the culture, the dancing,” said Bernadette Tei who, born and raised in American Samoa, said she grew up dancing all her life.

Tei taught dances to the many children who participated in the event.



Hohenfels teenagers perform traditional Pacific Island dances during the Joint Multinational Readiness Center and U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels’ Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebration May 14 at the Zone.

Though it meant hours of hard work on her part, she said she greatly enjoys teaching her culture to others, especially children.

“The kids really wanted to know

(traditional Pacific Island dances and culture), and should know. Some of them (children who performed dances) are not islanders so they got to learn something different,” said Tei.

College students express appreciation to military families with concert

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News



Students from Lee University perform May 14 in Hohenfels.

A group of more than 55 college students in crisp black suits turned the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels movie theater into a concert hall when the Lee Singers from Lee University brought their 2009 international tour to the Hohenfels community May 14.

The group from the small Christian college in Cleveland, Tenn., has performed with both the Chattanooga Symphony and Knoxville Symphony Orchestra and recorded seven albums in their 45-year history.

According to director Brad Moffett, the Singers complete an international tour every two years.

This year the group partnered with the Church of God Ministry to the Military and visited military posts throughout Germany, Moffett said, “to say thank you in person. We are thankful for the sacrifices our men and women in the military make. We want to bring a measure of hope and peace, whether you are in the military or not.”

The students performed a variety of music, mostly spiritual and gospel interspersed with some classical and contemporary

pieces. During the evening a number of students shared a favorite Bible verse with the audience and explained why they find it meaningful.

That, combined with an abundance of “alleluias,” “amens” and American Idol-worthy solos, made the night a combination of worship and music that was impossible not to tap your foot to.

To bring that energetic performance to service members throughout Germany, Moffett said each student was responsible for fundraising to pay their own way.

Zach Gibson, a senior next year and the son of a Navy chaplain, said it was well worth the effort.

“We want to support the troops and say thank you for the sacrifices they and their families make by ministering to the troops, families and personnel,” he said. Gibson said he enjoyed seeing the continuities and the differences between the different military religious programs they visited.

Of course, the scenery is not bad either.

“The castles and countryside are beautiful, and it is really interesting to see the history and culture,” Gibson said.

In addition to their biennial international tours to locations including Russia, Poland, Greece, Turkey, China and Japan, the full-time students perform 80 or more concerts each year.

Retiring command sergeant major credits, thanks NCOs, Soldiers for successful career

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Command Sgt. Maj. Perry Clark’s career has taken him a long way from Fort Jackson, S.C. where he enlisted as a unit supply specialist in 1981.

As he moved through the ranks from private to command sergeant major, Clark has served the United States Army at stations ranging from North Carolina and Virginia to Korea, Panama and Germany.

On what Clark called a “bittersweet day,” that career was honored during a ceremony May 14 at the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels post theater.

At the time of his retirement Clark had been the command sergeant major for USAG Hohenfels for the past two years.

Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg, garrison commander, spoke about Clark and what he has meant not just to installation Soldiers, but to Hohenfels

as a whole and to every Soldier he influenced during his time in the Army.

Bloomberg told a story during which he asked a young noncommissioned officer if he would attend Clark’s retirement ceremony.

“You know what he said? ‘I wouldn’t miss it Sir. Command sergeant major

Clark is one of my favorite command sergeants major.’ And that’s a direct quote,” Bloomberg said, explaining that the young Soldier was not in Clark’s chain of command.

“That says a lot about the kind of NCO this guy is and always will be.

“His span

of control as command sergeant major is far beyond the patch on his shoulder.”

Bloomberg pointed out that in his almost 29-year career, Clark has held four battalion level command sergeant major positions.

“He has dedicated the majority of his life to his country ... it doesn’t get better than this,” said Bloomberg.

Clark, who has attended many USAG Hohenfels functions held in honor of the Army’s declaration of 2009 as the Year of the NCO, spoke of his two daughters as his greatest accomplishment of all and read an email from his daughter about to earn her commission as a signal officer.

“She said, ‘I love you with all my heart but just have one question: Are you crazy? 29 years? I have only been in for 15 months but have all then experience I need to realize you have a few screws loose,’” said Clark.

After a moment of laughs, he came close to tears as he went on to explain why he stayed in the Army so long.

After asking all the young Soldiers, NCOs, and family members in the audience to stand, Clark said, “I wanted to take one last opportunity as an active duty Soldier to thank you for your patriotism, dedication and professionalism. You and all the other NCOs, Soldiers and families you represent, you are the real reason I stayed in the Army for so long.”

“If I must be remembered by the Army for something,” he said, his voice wavering, “I hope that would be it: that the Soldiers were always my number one priority.”

Clark thanked the unit leadership and fellow Europe command sergeants major that came to show their support.

“I have been in now for 28 years and 5 months, and I would not change any of it,” he said. “I will never forget being part of an incredible organization and an incredible team.”



Command Sgt. Maj. Perry Clark, former command sergeant major of U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels, accepts a flag from Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg, garrison commander, during Clark’s retirement ceremony May 14 at the post theater. Clark said he hopes he is remembered for always putting the welfare of Soldiers first.

Hohenfels commemorates ‘most solemn of national holidays’

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

More than one million American service members have died in combat since the civil war.

To honor them, members of U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels, the Joint Multinational

Readiness Center, tenant units and the community all gathered at the flag pole in front of JMRC headquarters May 20 to pay their proud and somber respects.

Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg, garrison commander, called Memorial Day, “the most solemn of national holidays, a day when we pause to reflect upon and honor the memory of those departed who have served our country in

uniform.”

High school student Angela Reinick also stressed the gravity of the day in her remarks.

“... We gather here today to celebrate Memorial Day, the day that opens eyes of Americans all over and helps us all understand the enormity and magnitude of the sacrifices of our dear fallen Soldiers and allows us to express just how much we appreciate their efforts and bravery,” Reinick said.

“I am proud of all of America’s warriors, whether currently fighting overseas in Southwest Asia, or planning to join the military and volunteer to fight alongside them or having already served our country,” she said.

Like Reinick, Bloomberg spoke not just of the actions of the fallen, but also about the pride the nation feels in the young men and women who continue to serve in the military.

“Today, thousands of young people answer the call from every state and every territory of this great nation. They come from all walks of life.

“They represent our best and our brightest. They are patriotic to the core ... They are fully aware of the risks they have been asked to take, and just like every generation before them, they face them willingly,” he said.

“Their devotion to duty honors the memory of

their fallen brethren each and every day.”

Bloomberg said while many will spend the day enjoying a day with their families, we should always treat Memorial Day as a time to remember the fallen and reflect on the gratitude we owe to all those who serve.

“Medals and awards are given to some,” he said, “but a simple and heartfelt ‘thank you’ is earned by all who serve, and have served, our country.”

After the remarks by Bloomberg and Reinick, representatives from the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10557 laid a wreath at the base of the flag pole to honor the tradition of placing flowers on the graves of fallen service members.

Members of Hohenfels Boy Scout Troop 303 also lay flowers at the site.

After the laying of flowers, JMRC Soldiers fired a 21-gun salute that was followed by the playing of Taps.

To conclude his remarks, Bloomberg chose to share words that appear on a memorial within Arlington National Cemetery, “... as nothing speaks higher to the memory of Americans fallen than these: ‘Not for fame or reward, not for place or rank, not lured by ambition or goaded by necessity, but in simple obedience to duty as they understood it, these men suffered all, sacrificed all, and died.’”

Left to right: Spc. Joshua Boulter, Spc. Kenneth Conaway, Pfc. Edwin Torres, Sgt. Andrew Johnson, Pfc. John White, Spc. Artreau Pickett and Spc. Juan Puente fire a 21-gun salute May 20 during a Joint Multinational Readiness Center and U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Memorial Day Ceremony.



\$3 million project consolidates fitness needs, opens gym to families

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

The Hohenfels community now has one comprehensive fitness facility with group exercise rooms, a basketball court, massage room, spinning room, family room, weight room and brand new machines thanks to a \$3 million dollar Installation Management Command funded project.

Fifteen months after U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels broke ground on the project, the grand re-opening May 18 unveiled a renovated and expanded post gym that has absorbed the now-closed Olympia Fitness Center.

“It has been over 20 years since Hohenfels has had one facility with everything under one roof.

“This is a ... world class facility that will house everything,” said Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg, garrison commander.

“It is awesome - enjoy it,” he said just before cutting the ceremonial

It has been over 20 years since Hohenfels has had one facility with everything under one roof. This is a ... world class facility that will house everything.

Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg, USAG Hohenfels Commander

ribbon, officially opening the center.

Most of the almost 4,000 square feet added to the gym is now a cardio and weight room filled with brand-new cardio and weight machines, free weights, bikes, seven 52-inch televisions and a wall full of windows.

“For sure all the stuff that is new can be attributed to the support of IMCOM-Europe,” Stacey Downing, USAG Hohenfels Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation director said. “We received significant assistance from the IMCOM-E region.”

Downing explained that the organization bumped Hohenfels’ equipment order to the front of the line to ensure it would be in place for the grand opening.

“Our customers are going to be blown away by all the new equipment,” she said.

For example, new treadmills and elliptical machines include a jack customers can plug their headphones into and listen to one of the room’s many TVs.

“There is a new atmosphere, new scenery, new equipment. It’s so nice. They did a great job. For all the guys who love to lift weights it’s like Christmas,” Capt. Anthony Williams said after seeing the new cardio and weight room.

For customers will small children, a large family room will allow parents to exercise while their children play in the room’s activity area or sleep in a

stroller beside them.

Completely separate from the rest of the facilities, the family fitness room includes treadmills and elliptical machines that are positioned farther apart to accommodate strollers.

Downing said two couches, which are currently in the corner of the room, will soon be replaced with children’s furniture to create a play area.

Strollers are welcome in the family room any time, while stroller hours will remain for use of the nautilus machines and free weights.

“I love that, I was hoping for something like that. It is an awesome idea,” Nicole Gavigan, who has a 19-month old and a 4-month-old, said about the family fitness room.

Whether patrons choose to work up a sweat in the family room, lifting weights or taking a group class in the classroom or spinning room, the new facility has accommodations where they can get a massage to ease their aching muscles.

FMWR now has two massage therapists under contract so customers can get a massage right at the gym.

Though things like massage rooms and new equipment are the big headlines of the project, Downing said there are also behind-the-scenes improvements that will mean better service for customers.

Additions like new offices, a new employee break room and a larger laundry room will make the gym much more functional, she said.

The Olympia Fitness Center, which used to house FMWR’s weight lifting equipment, is now closed for fitness purposes.

According to Downing, FMWR hopes to re-open it by the end of summer as an indoor paintball arena.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/ Vilseck Briefs

Boxing invitational

Join us for a boxing invitational Saturday at Rose Barracks Memorial Fitness Center, Bldg. 616. Weigh-ins and physicals: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Boxing events begin at 7 p.m.

For info, call DSN: 475-9007, CIV 09641-83-9007. or DSN 476-2214/2998, CIV 09662-83-2214/2998.

Warrant Officer Association

"The Nord Bayern-Silver Warrant Officer Association chapter would like to invite all Warrant Officers, active and retired, to a "Meet and Greet Family Social and BBQ" on June 6th, 1200-1700 at the Big Mike Pavilion on Rose Barracks, Vilseck.

The event is to promote Chapter awareness and our mission in order to enhance membership enrollment. Just bring your appetite, the cost is free.

For more, call Mark Manzo at DSN 475-6651, Calvin Cohen DSN 475-7383

Girl Scouts

The USAG Grafenwoehr Girls Scouts is recruiting for Overseas Committee Co-Chair and an OCC-elect for 2009-2010.

The Girl Scout Committee Chairs direct and supervise all Girl Scout Troops in Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, and Netzaberg.

For more information please contact Michelle Ashton Griffin at 09643-205233 or m.ashton@hotmail.com.

Auditor needed

The Vilseck Thrift Shop is looking for a qualified candidate to conduct their annual audit. Contact Megan Snyder at CIV 0151 522 12454 or meg.snyder@us.army.mil for more.

Napoleon reenactment

There will be a major reenactment of the Battle of Eggmühl June 12-13.

At this battle Napoleon and his German Confederation of Rhein allies decisively defeated the invading Austrian forces. There will be over 1000 authentically uniformed participants including Infantry, Artillery, and Cavalry.

This is the largest Napoleonic period event ever done in Bavaria. Eggmühl is 10 kms south of Regensburg on the B15.

For more, call George Rule at DSN 380-5430, CIV 0621-730-5430.

Ten miler qualifier

The U.S. Forces Ten Miler Qualifier will be held June 27 in Grafenwoehr.

Registration available at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil. Call DSN 475-7576/8207/7137 for more.

Spouses support group

Come to a support group for spouses of deployed Soldiers on the second and last Wednesday of each month from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Grafenwoehr Chapel Annex. Free childcare and lunch.

For more, call DSN 476-3276, CIV 09662-83-3276.

Car boot sale

The library will host a car boot sale June 6 and 20. This flea market type sale is held in Grafenwoehr. Open to ID card holders only, the Car Boot Sale is an at

your doorstep opportunity to rid your home of the extras or to find a bargain to add to your collection.

For more info call DSN 475-1740 or DSN 476-1740, or go online to www.library.eur.army.mil.

Ladies Day Out

The garrison chaplain's office is hosting a Ladies Day Out for single women to beautiful Regensburg June 6 from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sign up with Laurel Hoyt at CIV 0174-9195496, laurel.hoyt@cadence.org.

BOSS Salsa Night

Come to the BOSS Salsa Night June 11 at the "The Zone" Sports bar in Vilseck. DJ and Salsa dance instructions provided by Soldiers. Participants must be 18-years-old and older. For more information contact the BOSS Program Coordinator at DSN 475-8822.

Karaoke

The Zone Sports bar in Vilseck hosts karaoke every third Friday from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Songs range from adult contemporary to old school R&B and everything in between. For more info, call DSN 476-2360, CIV 09662-83-2360.

Executive Level EO Seminar

The 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command Cordially invites all 1st Sgts. and above, Company Commanders and above, GS13 and above to attend Executive Level EO Seminar. June 22 from 8 a.m. to noon at the Multi-Purpose Facility Bldg.134 Vilseck, Germany. RSVP by 17 June. Call DSN 475-8038 for more.

Apprenticeship program

Children Youth and School Services is implementing a new program for youth 15-18 years of age. The HIRED! Apprenticeship Program offers valuable paid work experience and training to better equip each participant with the skills needed for a highly-competitive job market.

A cash award and certificate is available to youth at the end of the term, provided by Kansas State University. Youth interested in learning a life skill and or wish to include this apprenticeship experience on college Applications/Scholarship Packages contact Joann Valenzuela at DSN 476-2662.

Horseback riding lessons

Sign up for the SKIES Unlimited horseback riding lessons June 22-26. Lessons will be in July at the Weiden Reiter Club. Sign-up at your nearest Central Registration office. Spaces will be limited.

Bodybuilding invitational

The USAG Graf Bodybuilding Invitational will be held June 13 at the Grafenwoehr Theater. Contact your local Sports office or Community Recreation Division for more information. Online registration available at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

Vaccination clinic

The Vilseck Veterinary Treatment Facility will sponsor a weekend vaccination clinic June 20. Services will include, but are not limited to: routine physical exams, vaccinations, Heartworm/Feline

leukemia tests, and fecal exams.

To schedule an appointment call DSN 476-2324, CIV 09662-83-2370.

Estate claims

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Sergeant Christian E. Buenogaldos of 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor should contact the following summary court martial officer, Capt. Phil Hensel at DSN 474-2391 or email phil.hensel@eur.army.mil.

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Sgt. William P. Sullivan II of 3rd Squadron, 2d SCR, H Company, 2nd Platoon should contact court martial officer 1st Lt. Timothy L. Geitner at DSN 476-5286 or e-mail timothy.geitner@eur.army.mil.

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Spc. Israel Candelaria Mejias of 1-2 IN Task Force, 3-66 AR, 172nd In Brigade, should contact the following summary court martial officer, 1st Lt. Sean N. Dexter at DSN 475-9262 or e-mail sean.dexter@us.army.mil.

Summer camp program

Teen Centers in Netzaberg and Rose Barracks will be offering a summer camp program from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Many exciting activities will take place - we'd love to have you!

All youth must be registered in CYSS to attend. For more information on summer camp, contact either Teen Center at DSN 476-3144 or DSN 475-9390.

Hohenfels Briefs

Open golf classic

The 2009 Open Golf Classic will take place June 5 at the Habsberg Golf Course.

Teams will consist of 4 people. The cost is 25 Euro Green Fee and a \$15 entry fee. Check-in is at 7 a.m. with a shotgun start at 8 a.m. Register until June 1. The first 18 teams receive a hat clip with Ball Marker.

Awards will be given for "Champions" and "Hackers" flights. Scores from the first nine holes will determine flight placement.

For more information about the Open Golf Classic, contact FMWR Sports and Fitness at dlmwrhohenfelssports@eur.army.mil.

Three castle tour

Join ITR June 6 for an enchanting tour of three of Europe's most fascinating castles.

The motor coach will depart Hohenfels from ODR, Bldg H15, at 4:30 a.m. and return around 9:30 p.m. Cost is \$55 per person and includes transportation. Entry to each castle is approximately 10 Euros.

Your reservation is not confirmed until payment is made. ITR operates on a first confirmed, first served basis.

Payment is due at close of business on June 4. For more information call ITR/ODR at DSN 466-2060.

Early pregnancy awareness

Register for this special Saturday edition designed for those newly pregnant moms and dads.

The workshop will cover nutrition, danger signs, exercise and important pregnancy wellness habits.

Get your questions answered June 6 from 10-12 a.m. at ACS, Bldg. 10. Call Priscilla Fleischer, New Parent Support Program coordinator, at DSN 466-4073 for more information.

Travel club

Going on the ITR trips to Prague and Berlin in June? Come to our the library's Travel

Club meeting on June 8 from 5 to 6 p.m. to get more information on these two fascinating cities.

If you've been there and have good tips to share come so others can benefit from your experiences. Call DSN 466-1740 for more.

Army birthday celebrate

The Joint Multinational Readiness Center and U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels invite all members of the community to celebrate the Army's birthday June 11 from noon to 1 p.m. at the Warrior Sports Café.

The scheduled guest speaker is retired Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Emery.

Summer reading program

Registration for the 2009 Summer Reading Program at the Library will run until June 12.

The kickoff is on June 17, with ages 5-8 at 10 a.m., ages 9-12 at noon, and ages 13-17 at 2 p.m. The theme for the two younger age groups is Be Creative at Your Library.

For teens the theme is Express Yourself at Your Library. For more information call Angelique at DSN 466-1740.

SKIES programs

Register now for Mom and Me Arts and Crafts Summer Sessions I & II.

Registration is from June 1-12 with session I classes due to start June 15 to July 17. Classes will not be held July 13-17.

Summer session 2 will be held from July 20 to August 14 with no classes being held from August 24-28. Registration for session 2 is July 6-17.

New programs including Ballet I, II and III, Pre-Ballet and Jazz combo, Level 1-3 Jazz, Creative Movement, Level 1-4 Gymnastics, Tots & Parent, and Tiny Tumblers will start June 15 to July 17.

For more information or to register visit CLEOS in Bldg. 10 or call DSN 466-2078 or call the SKIES program manager at DSN 466-4031.

'Czech' out Prague

Discover why Prague is known as the Jewel of Europe. Join ITR on a day of adventure to one of Europe's most mesmerizing cities. Passports are required.

The motor coach will depart Hohenfels June 13 from ODR, building H15, at 5 a.m. and return around 8:30 p.m. Cost is \$45 for all ages. Price includes roundtrip transportation. Seating is limited to the first 50 people. Your reservation is not confirmed until payment is made. ITR operates on a first confirmed, first served basis.

Payment is due at close of business on June 11. For more information call ITR/ODR at DSN 466-2060.

CPR and first aid class

The American Red Cross is offering a CPR and first aid class June 20 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cost is \$30 for First Aid, \$35 for CPR, or \$40 for both.

All classes are in the ACS conference room. To register call 466-1760 or visit the Red Cross office in Bldg. 10.

Youth summer opportunity

This summer, Club Beyond Hohen-

fels is offering an exciting week of camp to both middle and high school youth.

Beach Break for High School students takes place at Camp Darby, Italy June 20 to 25.

The Middle School week June 29 to July 3 is open to current 6th graders who will be 7th graders in the fall. The cost for both trips is \$350.

For a registration form visit www.hohenfels.army.mil/info/beachbreak.doc or email Chris Howard at Christopher.s.howard@eur.army.mil to have one sent to you.

If you have questions call Howard at CIV 01515-8219880. Students do not have to be registered or members with Club Beyond to participate in the trip.

Youth sports and fitness

Summer Mini Camp enrollment has begun.

The first week of specialty camps and trips start on June 22. Camp activities include street hockey, basketball, golf, canoeing, Garmisch hiking and boating, sand boarding, extreme sports ventures, tackle football, mountain biking, European handball and more.

For more information call Youth Sports and Fitness at DSN 466-2558/2479.

Camping equipment

Lots of new high quality camping equipment including tents, sleeping bags and food coolers have arrived at Outdoor Recreation ready for you and your family to enjoy.

Many great camping locations are nearby providing a very cost effective family adventure. Stop by outdoor recreation and review all of the available gear in person and get ready for a fun summer of camping with ODR.

For more information call DSN 466-2060.

Girl Scouts

If you wish to make a difference in the lives of young girls in this community, leaders and administrators are wanted for the premier leadership organization that develops girls.

Girl Scouts Hohenfels is seeking personnel possessing special knowledge, experience, creativity and or talents.

Anyone interested in volunteering for the Hohenfels Overseas Committee Management Team can call Chandra Roberts at 09492-906636 or email at Chandraroberts27@yahoo.com.

The girls are waiting for you, start volunteering today.

Let's Talk about Traveling



Are you thinking about going on the one day ITR trips to Prague or Berlin in June?

Here's a great way to know what's going on before you get there.

Join the group on Monday, June 8th for a quick hour starting at 5:00 p.m. at the Library and get ready for a great trip or share some of your Prague and Berlin stories.



For more information call 466-1740



172d Infantry Brigade TASK FORCE SHIELD WEE-EIB

WHEN: SATURDAY, 6 JUNE 2009

CHECK IN: STARTS AT 1400

WHERE: CAMP HERITAGE, GRAFENWOEHR, GERMANY

****OPEN TO ALL AGES****

****EVENTS TARGETED FOR KIDS 5-15****

STATIONS

- Face camo
- Drill & Ceremony
- Army physical fitness test
- Confidence Course
- Water Balloon Assault Course
- Land Nav

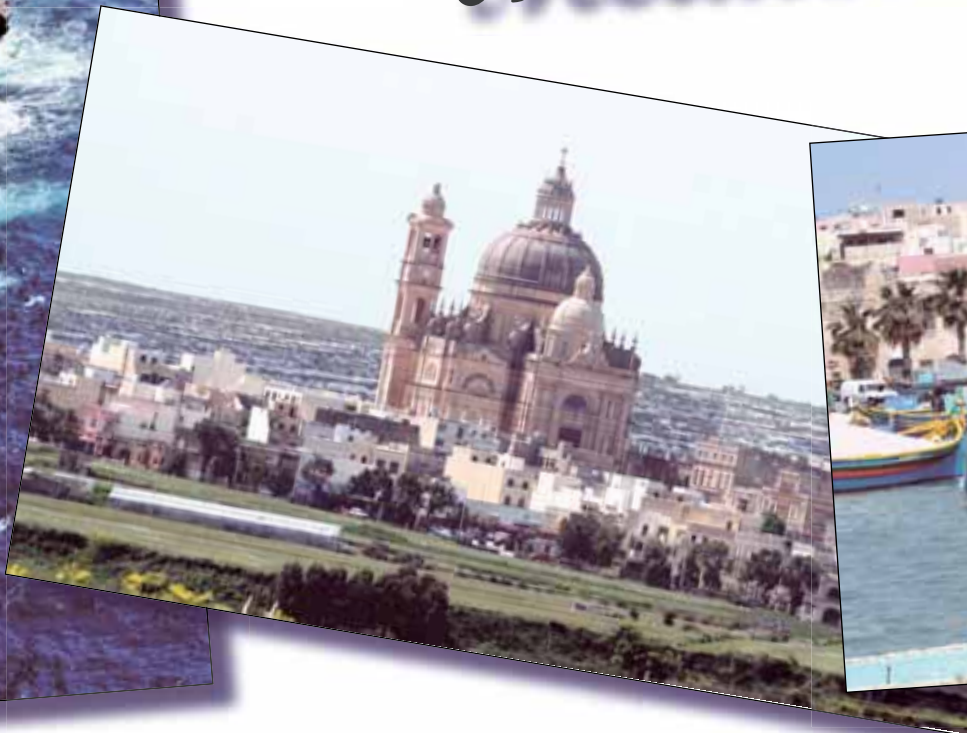
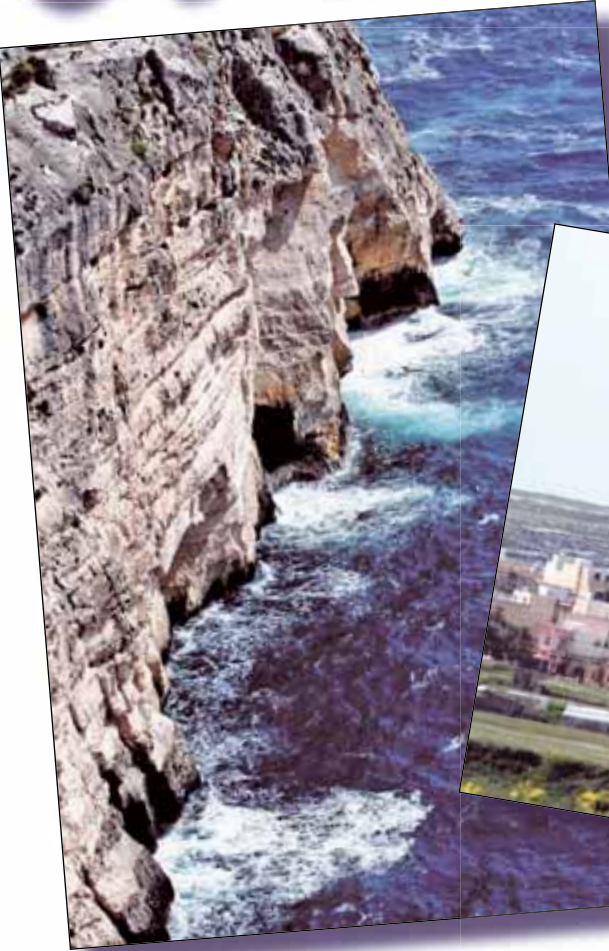
BONFIRE AFTER EVENTS





Malta

Explore an enchanting Mediterranean island



Story and photos by
ANDY BAILEY

Special to the Bavarian News

After a long dark winter in Germany, my wife and I searched for the perfect place to enjoy sunshine and relaxation for our spring vacation. We found the perfect mixture of sunshine, culture and rest in Malta.

Day 1

Our first day in Malta, we walked around Spinola Bay. Named for a Spanish nobleman, the bay is lined with restaurants, shops, and traditional Maltese fishing boats beautifully painted yellow, green and blue. We quickly learned that English was the main language of the island and had no trouble communicating.

Day 2

Our second day, we hired a cab to take us to the Three Cities, Vittoriosa, Senglea and Cospicua. The Cities date back to the Phoenicians. The ancient homes and fortresses offer a glimpse back to what life was like for them.

Several major civilizations from Phoenicians to Romans, Crusaders to Muslims, to the French and English empires settled on Malta.

Vittoriosa housed the Maritime Museum. Exhibits included log books from British war ships and parts from of triremes showing Malta's long shipping history.

Wandering through Vittoriosa we also found the Inquisitor's house. Site of the Spanish Inquisition, the self-guided tour contrasted how people were jailed and tortured during the Inquisition with displays on the history of Christianity on the island.

After our walk, I could feel the sense of historical importance of the island.

Day 3

Our third day, we scheduled an open jeep tour of the nearby island Gozo. Second of three islands in the Maltese archipelago, Gozo is the agricultural heart of Malta.

Our first stop was the fabled Blue Lagoon on the island of Como. The absolutely gorgeous water was an intense blue that I had never seen before.

We traveled through herds of goats, orchards of figs, pomegranates and lemons to the next stop - Calypso cave. Anyone who has had the rare pleasure (misfortune?) of reading Homer's "Odyssey" in high school English class might remember that Calypso was the sea nymph who imprisoned Odysseus. The cave was quite small and required a candle to illuminate my way as I climbed over rocks.

Below the cave is a beautiful orange-sand beach. Our guide quite proudly explained this particular beach was a film location for the movie "Troy." Little did I know that this would be a precursor of Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston sighting stories for the rest of our trip.

In the parking above the "Troy" beach and the Calypso cave, a stand sold hand made woolen goods from local sheeps' wool and honey from local bee hives. We watched the old Maltese women weaving the sweaters on site.

Our tour guide then drove us to the Ggantija or "Giant Towers," more than 5,000-year-old Neolithic temples. Unfortunately, there was not a lot of information on the history of the temples, but there were a lot of tourist stands selling

tourist stuff.

At that point we drove to Victoria, the medieval fortified town which is the heart of Gozo. There we ate a typical Maltese meal, all the food locally grown. Our guide explained that prior to Malta joining the EU, it was agriculturally self sufficient.

Our meal was an interesting cross of English and Italian cuisine. Malta is a former British colony and geographically close (60 miles) from Sicily. The meal was fabulous.

After our meal, we drove to the Azure Window, an enormous land and sea feature that can be seen from miles away.

It is hard to describe but is a huge rock out-cropping with a hole through it. The hole creates a frame and though it, the view looks like a picture of the sea crashing against the rocks. The area itself is reported to be a divers' paradise.

We then drove to the salt flats, our last stop of the tour. The local inhabitants carved several kilometers of one inch deep "pans" into solid rock in order to harvest salt from seawater.

The pans were anywhere from nine to sixteen square feet. The inhabitants would pour nearby seawater into the pans; once the water had evaporated they would gather the salt for use. Historically, the salt was used in food preservation.

Day 4

Our forth day, we arranged for a tour of the main island of Malta. Our first stop was the local artists' colony of Ta' Quali. The colony at one time had been a former British military base. The artists' shops are in old military Quonset huts. We saw

traditional glassblowing and filigree making.

After our several purchases of local crafts, our guide, Francis, took us to MDina-Rabat, the old walled fortress. En route, Francis took us on a stop to see a tree. It was a unique spot and spoke to how deep Christianity is rooted in Malta.

The tree had a natural formation of Christ on the Crucifix. After the mandatory pictures we went on to the old city.

Upon arriving, we walked around the city wall. The views of the island were fantastic. In town, we went to St. Paul's catacombs, named for St. Paul who was hidden in these catacombs from the Romans.

Our tour of the catacombs was odd. We expected to learn about St. Paul, but the tour focused on the origin of the catacombs and the pagan religions and cultures that would entomb the dead there. There was not a word on St. Paul.

Next we headed to the traditional fishing village of Marsaxlokk. It was incredible. The bay was filled with the traditional blue, green and yellow fishing boats as far as the eye could see. Lining the bay was an open air market packed with locally made foods and goods.

After an hour of haggling and buying, we met back up with our tour guide and headed toward our last stop: the Blue Grotto.

The Blue Grotto, near the town of Zurrieq, is a series of caves supposedly with the bluest waters. Unfortunately, the wind was too strong to hire a boat to get us out to see the grotto. We had our guide take us back to the hotel after a long day of walking and shopping.

Day 5

Our plan for the fifth day was to tour the capital city Valletta

named after the crusader that built the town. Much to our dismay, it was Good Friday. Malta observes Christian holidays.

It worked in our favor, however. It was a sunny day that we spent pool- side, resting, as the next day we would return to Germany.

Day 6

On our last morning, we hired an early cab to take us to Valletta to see St. John's Co-Cathedral. Several locals told stories about the cathedral the famous Black Gate.

Named the Black Gate from the time of Napoleon when he conquered the island, the Black Gate is completely made of silver.

When the French invaded, they proceeded to loot the island of its gold and silver. To protect the gate, the people painted it black in hopes of fooling the looters. The disguise worked and the Black Gate became a local legend.

When we arrived, the Cathedral was packed with people. We were able to see it was filled with stones ornately designed with crests of crusaders from across Europe.

After defending ourselves from French and German tour groups, we eventually made our way to the "Black Gate." I was disappointed and excited at the same time.

Stripped of its black disguise, I could see that it was an intricately designed silver gate. Unfortunately, the room was under construction so we could only look across the room at it. After the Cathedral, we decided to make a quick walk around town. The town was great and we wish we spent more time exploring it.

We found Malta to be one of the best Mediterranean Islands that we have visited. Its mixture of history, culture, people, and food made it an enchanting visit, well worth a return trip.



Physical therapy pilot program helps Soldiers return to duty, wear full gear

Story and photo by
ANNE M. TORPHY
Bavaria MEDDAC PAO

Orthopedic injuries have become one of the signature problems of the current deployments. Soldiers find that wearing their combat gear over the twelve and fifteen month time periods may cause stress on their knees, joints and backs.

Often soldiers are given a profile during a period of rest, surgery and rehabilitation.

After that period, one of the requirements to return to duty and be deployable is the ability to wear their full gear.

Soldiers may decide to put all of their gear on at once to test their limits. Bad idea.

“Soldiers on their own are doing too much and may experience a setback,” Dr. David Drake said.

Drake and a Vilseck physical therapist couple, Matt and Capt. Emily Stehr, have worked together to create a program that helps Soldiers return to duty by helping them progressively add weight to their load without reinjuring themselves.

Matt Stehr, a physical therapist a Vilseck Health Clinic, said the program is similar to a run/walk program to increase distance.

Stehr explained that the goal is to work over four to six weeks on adding weight to reach full gear capacity.

Each Soldier begins by walking two miles at their own pace once a day for a week, then two to three miles at a fifteen minute pace once a day for another week

In the third week, the program is tailored to each person and they begin with wearing 10 percent of their body weight for half a mile, every other day.

The Soldier increases their load by five percent of their body weight each week and

increases mileage as well.

By the end of the program, the Soldier should be able to walk two miles with a 48 pound load.

Cpl. Robert A. Shomper, a Soldier with the Warrior Transition Unit in Vilseck, said he started the program about 10 weeks ago and was able to wear his full gear in eight weeks.

Shomper said once he started, he added weight about every four days.

Shomper did have pain at various times, but he said, “Matt Stehr and Dr. Drake were great at keeping an eye on me. Matt would check to see how I was wearing the gear and Dr. Drake helped to monitor my pain.”

Stehr emphasized that the program needs to be supervised by a physical therapist and physician to make sure no injuries occur.

He also explained that the Soldiers must stop if they experience any excessive pain, swelling or stiffness, especially the next morning, so that an assessment may be done.

Shomper felt the key to his success was the combination of the progression program plus a lumbar stabilization core strengthening class for his back led twice a week by Sgt. Nathan Tormala at Vilseck Physical Therapy.

Tormala said the class is used during later stages of rehabilitation and treatment and is designed to help Soldiers learn the proper techniques to move as well as to strengthen abdominal and spinal muscles.

Exercises include a variety of crunches and stretches under Tormala’s supervision.

Shomper said without the class and the program, he “probably would have thrown on all the gear and tried to hump it and possibly injure myself.”

Drake said that one of the best benefits of the program is that “Soldiers become confident that they can wear their gear” and begin a



Cpl. Robert A. Shomper is part of a pilot treatment program that gradually adds weight and mileage plus focuses on strengthening back exercises so that he is now able to wear his full gear again.

return to duty.

Shomper’s plan is to have a RTD status by mid-June. “If you’re serious about wearing your gear, and you follow Matt’s guidance to a ‘T’,

this will work,” Shomper said. “The program may not be suitable for everyone, but if you are, there is no reason why it won’t help you return to duty.”

Partnership with German surgeon promotes, enhances quality care

Story and photo by
SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

Medical professionals gathered at the Schweinfurt Health Clinic May 8 to discuss orthopedic concerns and share knowledge about common foot and ankle injuries found in the military community of Schweinfurt.

Special guest, Dr. Stefan Feiler, an orthopedic surgeon practicing in Schweinfurt, came with a presentation on the subject.

“It’s not possible to go into too much detail in ... one-and-a-half hours, so I call this a high-speed flight through all the possibilities of modern foot and ankle surgery. It’s a good thing for giving them an overview,” he said in an interview beforehand.

Feiler and the Schweinfurt Health Clinic staff have built a close partnership in caring for patients needing medical attention for injuries.

Soldiers or family members needing further assistance in correcting injuries may be referred to his office.

“We have a very high grade of specialization. We are very skilled in the things we are doing,” Feiler said, explaining how they do the same surgeries on a regular basis and therefore have a high success rate.

During his visit, the medical professionals showed Feiler the gear that the Soldiers wear and explain how the equipment, in addition to particular sitting positions in military vehicles, can be a contributing factor to some of the Soldiers’ injuries.

“These back-to-back deployments are taking a toll on these joints,” said Kevin Worth, Warrior Transition Unit nurse case manager.

Worth explained how Soldiers gain 100 pounds of weight in only



Staff Sgt. Peter Berthold, left, shows Dr. Stefan Feiler, German orthopedic surgeon, the amount and weight of the equipment worn regularly by American Soldiers as Maj. (Dr.) Vinaya Garde looks on.

30 seconds when they don their gear. Testing the strength of the body for this weight is done through the regular physical training tests.

“It doesn’t really give you a good idea of how strong somebody’s core is,” Worth said of the physical training tests. Taking into account the probable causes of injuries seen in the clinic and referred to him and other off-post specialists, Feiler jumped into his presentation about the most modern

foot and ankle surgeries available to patients.

The lengthy discussion illustrated the fact that partnerships and communication open a vast pool of knowledge for medical professionals to pull from.

“We are really lucky to have Dr. Feiler take time out of his busy schedule to come see us,” said Maj. (Dr.) Vinaya Garde, Schweinfurt Health Clinic medical director.

Warrior Transition Command activates, names top priorities

by **J.D. LEIPOLD**
Army News Service

A new command to provide sole guidance and policy for the Army’s 36 Warrior Transition Units and the nine Community Based Warrior Transition Units was activated May 11, in the Pentagon courtyard.

The new Warrior Transition Command will oversee the care of more than 9,500 wounded, ill and injured Soldiers while providing centralized family support under the command of Brig. Gen. Gary H. Cheek, who also serves as assistant surgeon general for warrior care and transition.

Guest speakers included Secretary of the Army Pete Geren and Medical Command chief Lt. Gen. Eric B. Schoomaker, who also serves as the Army’s surgeon general.

Geren said the standup of the WTC was the silver lining in a dark cloud of what happened at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 2007.

“It really was a wake-up call and helped us to see how much more we could be doing for those wounded, ill and injured Soldiers who are outside of our primary care and outpatient care,” he said.

“The WTC is the culmination of efforts that bring together many different aspects of our Army.

“All these efforts are joined in one purpose, and that’s our commitment to never leave a fallen comrade on the battlefield and never leave a fallen comrade in the hospital or in outpatient care.”

Schoomaker added that in spite of an Army in tremendous movement, from seven years of war, base realignment and closure through the re-stationing of Soldiers outside of the continental U.S., to power projections inside, along with modularity and transformation, the “Army remains committed to improving the care that we’re giving to wounded, ill and injured Soldiers through the creation of the Warrior Transition Command.”

He said since the beginning of

operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, more than 61,000 Soldiers had entered the Army’s medical system.

Today, more than 85 percent, or 51,000 of those Soldiers have completed the transition back to active duty, a figure of two brigades a year.

The new WTC commander said one of his first three priorities is to implement the comprehensive transition plan for every Soldier “to get them excited about their future, whether that’s in the Army or out because a Soldier excited about their future is a Soldier who will aggressively pursue their rehab and therapy.”

The second part of Cheek’s priorities is to work in concert with strategic leaders in the other services for a new way of taking care of those who have born the burden of serving the country.

“Our current physical disability evaluation was crafted in the 1940s for a draft Army and an industrial-agricultural America and now we have a professional Army in an information-age America,” he said.

“We want that system to reflect the nation and we want it to be a system that is more than just about disability and compensation; it’s also about rehabilitation and productivity and that really inspires Soldiers to have a great future whatever that may be.”

Cheek said his third focus is on families and though he believes the Soldier Family Assistance Centers are doing a great job, he wants to custom tailor a family program to each warrior in transition.

“We want a family program where we have literally interviewed each family and built a program that’s right and appropriate for that family - whether a Soldier is living with parents, siblings or spouses or far away,” he said.

“The family is a permanent part of a Soldier and long after the Army is gone, it will be the family that provides the support and everything else for the Soldier.”

IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION

Before your child can receive any immunizations at the Vilseck Health Clinic, they must have had a recent annual health physical, or be scheduled one in the upcoming month. Additionally, if your child is under 24 months old, they are required to have well-baby visits. Contact the Vilseck Health Clinic at DSN 472-2882, CIV 09662-83-2882 to schedule either a well-baby or annual health physical for your child.

Chaplains reinforce more than faith

by **Capt. STEPHEN C. SHORT**
172nd Infantry Brigade

Reinforcements are something that every unit loves to have; more Soldiers to help win the fight and save lives at the same time.

The duty of being a Soldier can be very difficult at times and no matter how many extra Soldiers arrive to the battlefield, the burden just sometimes

does not seem to lift.

Warriors who have experienced deployments away from friends and family might know how heavy that burden can feel.

One of the reinforcements that the Army and all branches of service have come to count on in time of need is the chaplain.

Maj. Chuck B. Rizer, 172nd Infantry Brigade Chaplain, believes that all

faiths and even Agnostics or Atheists can receive help from a chaplain.

The Army expects chaplains to observe the distinctive doctrines of their faith while also honoring the right of others to observe their own faith.

"I've had Catholics come to me and say, 'I want to be a better Catholic,'" said Rizer. "I've had Christians, non-Christians and even Atheists come to me and say they want to have a better relationship with their spouse," added Rizer, who calls Chicago home.

The Army expects chaplains to observe the distinctive doctrines of their faith while also honoring the right of others to observe their own faith.

The Army is a diverse environment with Rabbis, Ministers, Imams and Priests who are to serve Soldiers with conviction and commitment.

Chaplains may serve their own faith groups in the Army, but they are to ensure and provide the means for others to observe their own faith in accordance with U.S. laws and regulations.

Rizer spends much of his time counseling Soldiers on marital issues and finds there are certain principles that apply to all people and faiths.

"I often tell people that if you want your spouse or significant other to stay with you then you need to be going somewhere," said Rizer.

"You can see the enthusiasm in their eyes when they have a plan and others are attracted to that," he added.

Some Soldiers need help dealing

with anger. Rizer has seen that getting sleep and basic needs are some of the simple solutions he is able to help people find in dealing with anger.

"If a child doesn't get their sleep, food or other basic needs then of course they get angry, and we are more mature than that, but we need to have some of our basic needs met or we become cranky or angry," said Rizer.

Rizer believes diet, exercise and just talking it out or venting at him is a good way to get over anger issues.

"If you take one straw off a camel's back, it may be just enough to keep him moving," stated Rizer.

"It is the little things that you change, which can be all the difference in starting a chain of good things happening," he added.

Capt. Richard O. Nevard Jr., 9th Engineer Battalion Chaplain, sees the chaplain as being out with the Soldiers where they are and doing what they are doing.

"I go out where they are and I see the results of what we have worked on, and I even see the results happen here while the session is going on in the office," said Nevard, from New Smyrna Beach, Fla.

The brigade dedicated the Chaplain's Coffee House on Apr. 23 to all Soldiers, which gives them a place for Soldiers to come and relax.

The coffee house has a connecting hallway that runs right by the chaplain's office, which makes it easy for Soldiers to stop by anytime and ask to talk.

Nevard's office attaches to the coffee house and has a uniquely decorated area for sitting down and talking.

"There's not an hour that goes by that a Soldier is not coming by and knocking on the door to ask if you have a minute, and I am like come on in and let's talk," stated Nevard.

Chaplains are also responsible for caring for the Soldiers' families, and may often find themselves serving the spiritual needs of Sailors, Marines, or Airmen.

"I have talked with spouses back home, they email me or I call them because I already have that connection with them since I've done the marriage retreats back in the rear," said Nevard.

Chaplains can be new to deployment as well. Capt. Frank Halka, 172nd Support Battalion Chaplain, spent six years in garrisons serving as a Catholic priest and saw a different perspective of deployments by counseling those family members not deployed.

"You see what families go through in the rear and you are better able to help the Soldier here in Iraq because you can relate to both environments," said Halka.

Chaplains are available anytime to help, whether deployed or back home in garrison.

"I see myself being useful to the Soldiers when I'm there to listen to them and hear what they are going through, because that is part of the healing process," added Halka.



Photo by Pfc. Bethany L. Little

Battalion chaplains occupy offices to the left and right of the Chaplain's Coffee House. The coffee house is a place for Soldiers to relax and enjoy a drink, but also to give them a chance to talk.

Bull Dogs demonstrate knowledge, skills in Stetson competition

Story and photo by
SpC. JERRY WILSON
2SCR Public Affairs Office

It has always been a point of pride amongst Cavalry Troops to be able to wear the famous Stetson.

Troopers from Fires Squadron, Bravo Battery, 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment spent two days in competition for the coveted head gear.

"What we are doing is the Bull Dog Stetson competition," said Capt. Joseph Shorr, 2nd Platoon Leader. "It's a competition we developed for Soldiers, E-4 and below to get a chance to earn their Stetsons."

According to Shorr the contestants were randomly broken down into three-man teams and put through a series of tests based on common tasks Soldiers would face throughout the course of their duties.

Each task is designed as a team-building exercise.

"We wanted to give our Soldiers the opportunity to feel the Spirit de

Corps and experience the camaraderie that is the Cavalry tradition," he said. "The events test their physical skills, teamwork and Cavalry knowledge."

Day one consisted of two events.

The morning began with a land navigation competition. Each team had to locate and travel to seven points within the course.

At each site there was a uncommon task they had to complete before moving on to finding the next. Some common tasks included; assembling and disassembling the M-4 and 50-Cal, calling in a medical evacuation and evaluate and treat a casualty.

The Troopers were given four hours to complete the course.

In addition to the land navigation event, Soldiers were required to take a written test on Cavalry knowledge and Regimental history.

"They are also asked questions which are relevant to field artillery," Shorr said.

Later that afternoon the teams

assembled to compete in the timed obstacle course competition.

Each team was required to push a HMMV, low crawl through a sand pit, perform a litter carry, toss a truck tire and numerous other tasks designed to test their stamina and endurance.

Day two was spent at the Leader's Reaction course.

While at the LRC Soldiers were broken down into teams and given a variety of problems to overcome.

Each team must work together to accomplish their mission within a given time period.

When they weren't overcoming obstacles at the LRC they were testing their marksmanship prowess at the Engagement Skills Trainer.

The EST is a computerized firing range that allows each Soldier to test their judgment in shoot, don't shoot scenarios.

Soldiers earn team points as well as individual. In the end the top three point holders received the prize.



Competitors build a plank bridge during the Leader's Reaction Course part of the Bull Dog Stetson Run.

Year of the NCO Spotlight



Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Boom

Age: 51

Current Unit: Joint Multinational Readiness Center

Current Position: Warhog Maneuver Team Senior Enlisted Observer Controller

Component: Active Army

Current Location: Hohenfels, Germany

Hometown: Sacramento, California

Years of Service: 25

As the Senior Enlisted Maneuver Team Observer Controller, Boom attributes his success to the time that his NCOs spent downrange taking care of his troops so that they could accomplish the mission. Prior to his position with JMRC, he was deployed for fifteen months during Operation Iraqi Freedom with the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment of Vilseck, Germany. Boom's Squadron had the highest number of reenlistments during his tenure with the Regiment. Additionally, the unit also maintained the highest percentage of Expert Infantry Badge recipients within the Regiment before their deployment.

While in Iraq, Boom's Squadron established a Combat Outpost from scratch in the shadows of Sadr City, one of the most dangerous sectors in Iraq. Living conditions were harsh. For more than 12 months, the squadron frequented the desolate combat outpost, and later spearheaded the uprising in Sadr City, which began March 25, 2008. It concluded after a tough 70-day urban fight, which stopped insurgents from firing rockets into the Green Zone, and provided the security needed, which allowed engineers to build a wall of protection. This wall established checkpoints in and out of Sadr City, eliminating enemy fighter's freedom of movement. Boom returned from Iraq in October 2008. As an experienced war veteran, Boom has much to pass on to other units training for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan at the Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels training areas.

"Whether it is Iraq, Afghanistan, or elsewhere, NCOs make the difference in taking care of Soldiers - ensuring they have the best possible living conditions, so they can refit and prepare to accomplish the next mission," said Boom. "This is a challenge when units are more or less self-supporting, and the enemy has a vote. When Soldiers see small gradual improvements in their quality of life, despite the obstacles, unit cohesion and morale goes up." Nothing in Iraq is easy. Religious services, internet and phone access became important. Taking care of Soldiers means providing the best quality of life possible for America's most precious assets, our Soldiers, said Boom.



Drill team takes gold at European championship

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

The torch has been passed.
The Ansbach High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps ended Patch High School JROTC’s 25-year run by earning the best overall trophy at the Army Department of Defense Dependent Schools Europe JROTC Drill Championships May 16 at Katterbach.
Ansbach’s championship performance was the result of solid performances in all seven drill categories - the cadets walked away with eight total trophies - that included several second and third place finishes.
Now the overall best trophy belongs to a new era of cadets, said Maj. Bob Hase, director of Army instruction for JROTC Europe. “The tide has turned slightly and the overall trophy will now be presented to Ansbach.”
Ansbach’s JROTC commander and platoon drill team captain, Cadet 1st Lt. Jeff Brice, explained why and how the tide turned.
“We practiced every day after school for two, sometimes 2 1/2 hours since the beginning of the school year,” he said. “I’d like to say we are professionals.”
He added that the daily time invested was spent performing mostly regulation drill and ceremony sequences, repetitiously, “until it is done right,” he said.
But one drill he mentioned really helped.
“Knock-out drill,” he said of the exercise where cadets are eliminated after making a mistake. “It’s a series of random commands, with the last man standing receiving a higher position in the platoon.”
And the long training hours paid off.
“This year, we qualified in all events while last year we only qualified for three - and lost the overall trophy by three points,” said Brice.
Cadets do not just show up at the finals - they must first qualify to even meet for the championships, said Fran Simmons, a volunteer at the school in Ansbach.
“The teams have to win first or second place at two of the regular season events to qualify for



Ed Parowski, leader of the Ansbach saber team - a first for JROTC Europe - salutes an inspector upon completion of the team’s routine, during the European drill finals for Army JROTC, hosted in Katterbach May 16.
the corresponding final event,” she said.
She explained that during the championship finals, the teams earn five points each for winning first place in an event; three for each second place and one for each third place - all points being applied toward the best overall trophy.
During the competition, she said, Ansbach earned 23 points of a possible 35 points.
With discipline, hard work and dedication being the order of the day, all the participants were ready to do their best.
“This is their Olympics,” Simmons said.
With a background in marching band, Simmons coordinated and choreographed the Ansbach saber exhibition drill team’s routine--a first for a DODDS-Europe JROTC - to the tune of Kansas’ 1976 hit, “Carry On Wayward Son.”
She explained that the cadets use real weapons and do not have practice sabers, and they often come away with cuts and bruises on their hands and arms.
“These kids are taking the initiative,” she said. “They have put in a lot of hours—this is a voluntary operation.”

Hosted by Ansbach the last several years, Hase said the event was top-notch.
“The Ansbach JROTC program, in cooperation with their local community and military command partners, put together a great event and we could not ask for a better show. Everything was first class-thank you,” he added in the e-mail to the school.
Diana Ohman, director of DODDS Europe, said location is important and could not have happened without Ansbach.
“I am thankful for Ansbach because of this hangar,” she said. “If it was pouring rain like it was last night, where would we do it? We are very, very thankful for the support and we do not do this without help from our military leaders and commands. This is pretty high-level stuff.”
She added the main reason for the competition is student development and discipline.
“The overall reason for JROTC is because it develops leadership skills,” she said. “It really sharpens the kids, developing these young people into good citizens and leaders.”
Ansbach award winners:
Platoon Drill - 3rd place:
Marie Cook; Larissa Deikun; Faith Brice; Jeff Brice; Ed Parowski; Raul Bracero; Alex Marshall; Corey Shelvock; Jessica Sowders; Rachael Wright; Craig Munn; Doug Ahearn; Michael Steinke; Anthony Thompson and Paula Vazquez
Squad Drill - 2nd place:
Marie Cook; Jeff Brice; Ed Parowski; Raul Bracero; Alex Marshall; Michael Steinke; Anthony Thompson and Paula Vazquez
Individual Precision - 1st place:
Jeff Brice
Two Man Exhibition - 1st place:
Jeff Brice and Ed Parowski
Color Guard - 3rd place:
Marie Cook; Ed Parowski; Raul Bracero; and Alex Marshall
Team Exhibition - 2nd place:
Marie Cook; Ed Parowski; Cory Shelvock; Jessica Sowders; Rachael Wright; Craig Munn; Doug Ahearn
One Man Exhibition - 1st place:
Jeff Brice

Ansbach’s JROTC team prepares for National Academic Bowl

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

The Ansbach High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps is on top of its game and has a reservation in Washington, D.C., to compete in the National Academic Bowl June 26-30.
One of only 24 teams, out of more than 1,600 schools in the Nation to qualify and advance to the finals, Lt. Col. Dennis Kirstein, senior Army instructor for Ansbach JROTC, said the cadets have been working hard and named the winning team members: Marie Cook, Anthony Thompson, Kiley Schreurs and Ed Parowski.
After advancing through the first two phases of the competition, the Ansbach team competes in the final championship round of The College Options Foundation’s 2009 JROTC Leadership and Academic Bowl,

on the campus of George Mason University, Kirstein explained.
Marie Cook, JROTC bowl team member, said they prepared by studying specifically what they will likely see on standardized tests.
“Mostly we studied the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) and ACT (American College Testing) questions, which is what the academics was mainly about, and kept up with current news for the current event questions,” she said, adding it is like state level winning.
“We qualified for the academic portion, representing 2nd Brigade out of New Jersey, because they are responsible for all the Europe schools,” Kirstein explained.
But the competition phases were conducted world-wide; so how did the teams compete?
“We did them all online,” said Cook and explained the unique testing phases.
“All JROTC battalions had to

take the first test, which was around November, consisting of standard high school curriculum: Math, Science, English, and leadership skills, which we passed,” she said.“Then a few months later, around March, we had level two which we passed as well. So, Washington will be level three and that will determine the overall winner.”
She added winning is good for the battalion and school’s reputation.
“Our battalion and school are getting known and shows our educators are good and provide the right materials to study, and that they taught us really well,” she said. “We have a good academic bowl team and we could probably continue to win in the future if we train future bowl members for next year. It would be nice if we could go every year.”
“It goes to prove what we already knew,” Kirstein said, “We are the best in academics and have some excellent students.”



Ed Parowski, Dominic Barrale, Marie Cook and Anthony Thompson, Ansbach High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, brush up on fundamental educational skills in preparation for the National Academic Bowl June 26-30, in Washington, D.C. Parowski, Cook and Thompson will be joined by Kiley Schreurs at the bowl. Barrale will not attend due to prior commitments.

New SORT guide provides information to make recycling easy

by **CONNIE SUMMERS**
USAG Ansbach Public Affairs Office

Separate or Recycle Trash is a program that can save the garrison money, and bring those savings back into the community in the form of improved facilities and programs.
SORT is an educational program that works to make recycling easy for people. While it is normally directed towards children, a new booklet seeks to reach the community as a whole.
With a federal U.S. budget deficit of nearly \$1.2 trillion, savings of some \$38,000 may seem rather trivial to many of us.
However, when that additional money “could be used to pay for special community projects we normally couldn’t afford because of budget constraints--we need to make every effort to reign in those savings,” said Col. Christopher M. Hickey, commander of U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach. “It benefits our entire community when we recycle our trash deliberately and more effectively.

“Besides that, it is the law. It is our responsibility to recycle all that we can,” he added.
To entice garrison residents, as well as those who live off post, to do just that, Jutta Seefried, recycling coordinator for the Ansbach Environmental Management Division, points out a renewed effort and a new campaign her department initiated.
An information brochure for the SORT campaign is expected to be available and distributed in late May throughout the community.
S.O.R.T. “Separate or Recycle Trash” is the headline of the colorful booklet.
It explains in great detail why there is a need to recycle; what types of so-called wastes can and need to be recycled; in which container bins they should be disposed of; and where those bins are located, as well as showing alternative locations of those containers.
“The more we recycle, the less we have to spend our garrison money on companies who collect residual

(regular non-recyclables) trash,” she said.
For instance, no extra charges accrue in housing areas for recycling paper, flattened cardboard, used clothes and shoes, glass bottles, cans and items made of aluminum and plastic packaging.
And it’s “not only money” but also vital and diminishing resources like water, gas and electricity that are being saved, which accumulate with additional pick-up collections, according to Seefried.
“At the end, we also limit air pollution.”
She points out that paper “can be recycled and used up to seven times.”
However, television reports often show paper being washed during the process of recycling, often feeding the false perception that it’s okay to throw soiled paper into the recycle bin.
Seefried emphasizes that paper must be clean since the recycling process is not able to filter out grease, food residues or other soiling yet.

Is there hope for the future?
“Possibly” she said.
Unfortunately, residents at some housing areas here seem to make less of an effort to recycle paper and other waste products than one would hope for, Seefried said.
“At least, that’s what overflowing trash containers for unrecyclable waste opposed to the relatively empty recycling bins seem to indicate,” she said.
“The reason for that may be because people often dispose recyclables in containers located at the work environment or near the shopping center,” she conceded. “It’s simply more convenient for many.”
That, though, in turn costs additional funds since recycle bins are picked-up “half empty” and money has to be spent for their pick-up, while those completely filled and located near the post exchange often have to be picked-up twice, “once more in addition to their regular collection day.”
Another issue is what a survey conducted in October 2008 revealed

about the recycling collection point at Katterbach Kaserne. Almost half of the people living off-post disposed of their trash on base, according to Seefried.
She said that everyone living off post is required by German Waste Law to properly dispose off their accumulated waste “where it originates.”
That means “it is actually prohibited to dispose waste anywhere else,” she said. Also, she pointed out, landlords normally provide trash containers and include the costs in the monthly rent, resulting in Soldiers and U.S. civilians being reimbursed by the government.
“Therefore, when tenants take their trash on base and illegally dispose of it, the U.S. taxpayer is paying twice because of the additional pick-up on base,” she said.
And besides avoiding paying tax dollars twice, doing things the right way can really pay off.
“What many people don’t realize, we waste a lot of money that way which could be spent to improve the community,” Hickey said.

Community promotes environmental responsibility, awareness with youth

Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
Bavarian News

Students from Schweinfurt Elementary and Middle School went green during environmental awareness days May 12-14 at the Conn Recycling Center, hosted by the environmental division of the Directorate of Public Works.

During the field trip, students rotated to various stations as they learned about different ways to conserve, protect and improve the environment.

“(Environmental awareness day) means being aware of the many aspects of the environment.

“That could be nature ... that could be the problems with the environment as far as pollution control and the ecosystem.

“It’s also being aware of how we can protect it. The first step is awareness, and the next step is protecting it,” said Joel Helston, teacher at the elementary school and leader of the school’s environmental club dubbed Wilbur’s Green Team.

Of the seven stations, students learned things such as how to recycle, how to make paper, and how to operate a fire extinguisher.

Other activities included the construction of a paper windmill where students learned about the strong force that wind can carry and



Third-grade student Karsyn Goss puts her constructed windmill in the sand during Environmental Awareness Day. Windmills helped students understand the force behind wind.

how that could be used.

“We wanted to show them so they could see the force behind wind and

understand how we can use that force for renewable energy,” said Angelika Elliott, an engineer from DPW.

Furthermore, students learned the importance of saving the planet, because after all, “there is only one

Earth,” as was the central theme for one of the stations where Helston surveyed students, assessing how much space it takes for them to live their lives.

“The ultimate goal is for the kids to realize how much area we use up.

“Too often kids have the impression that it’s just the one spot they’re standing in. I’m trying to bring it down to the fact that we only have one Earth.

“I think the kids are becoming surprised when they see that ‘wow, I need seven Earths if everybody lived the way I did,’” he said, adding that it’s important for everyone to know what they’re doing wrong in order to correct it.

Children walked away equipped with the knowledge of energy conservation, pollution control and overall environmental protection.

“The children are our future. Environmental awareness is important because it teaches the kids and the kids teach their parents,” said Lothar Rueckert, chief of the environmental division.

Kids are already showing their knowledge and ability to teach as third-grader Brom Eccles stated, “We do not have another Earth. This is the only one we have. Without it, we’ll go into extinction.”

“We can help save the Earth by planting, conserving and recycling,” added third-grader Anakin Hendrix.

Elementary science fair displays student discoveries

Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
Bavarian News

Albert Einstein once said, “Science is a wonderful thing ... the greatest scientists are artists as well,” and the students of Schweinfurt Elementary School proved just that by showcasing not only their artistic ability through project presentation, but their scientific knowledge through experimentation as well.

The science fair, held at the elementary school, is an annual event where students display their creative thinking while conducting an experiment to prove or disprove their proposed theory. Students of all grades presented ideas across the spectrum ranging from life on other planets, to fingerprinting, to the mummification of a chicken.

“The children are interested in science. They’re thinkers. They create things, and it allows them to realize that they can ask a question, make a hypothesis, theorize about what is going to happen, and prove it by the methods they use or the experiment they come up with,” said Jean Kenny, a fifth-grade teacher and coordinator of the science fair.

Rows and rows of presentations filled rooms in the third-grade hall while parents and families mingled to view the works of these bright young minds.

“It builds self-confidence as they realize that they’re young scientists. They are science and the world around them is science,” Kenny said.

“I like science because it’s cool and you can get your hands messy and be with friends,” said Jeffrey Hite, a fifth-grade student who conducted an experiment on the creation of hydrogen.

In addition to the students’ work, everyone who attended had the opportunity to enter the “star lab”, a simulation of the many constellations in the universe. Shaped like a big dome, students and parents could crawl into it and listen to a brief presentation by Michael Yarbrough, a first-grade teacher, who pointed out the different star clusters in the sky.

In the end, students learn how much science surrounds them in their everyday lives, explained Kenny.

“Everything is science and when they realize that, they’ll have a better appreciation for themselves, the world, and the things around them. I see the light in their eyes and it warms my heart,” Kenny said.

Third-grade student Jessica Trussell explains her fingerprinting experiment to her father, Douglas, during the Schweinfurt Elementary School science fair May 20.



Conn chapel ‘fills the gap’ with Christian fellowship night

by **SANDRA WILSON**
Bavarian News

The chapel on Conn Barracks has been quiet for some time, but a new program geared toward single Soldiers, civilians and family members out of high school is determined to energize the building once more.

Every Thursday and Sunday throughout the summer, the Conn chapel has its doors open from 6:30 to 8 p.m. to welcome the crowd that seems to be left out when it comes

to religious activities suited for adult singles.

“Schweinfurt already has a program for families,” said Chaplain (Maj.) Sam Dunaway. “We’re filling a gap by standing in a gap.”

These “open chapel” Christian fellowship nights, as they are described, are not designed to take the place of attending chapel services on the weekends.

The word “service” really doesn’t even apply to gatherings, as there will be no communion or offerings taken

up, and it will be a very casual Bible-learning environment.

“This isn’t going to be a lecture ... my goal is simply conversational Bible study,” Dunaway explained.

Dunaway and Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Stevan Horning both lived on Conn Barracks for a time and described that their conversations with single Soldiers gave them the idea for starting the program.

“They just want to talk. They want solid teaching,” Horning said, going on to say that he was often asked about

the truth and what is to happen when the world’s end.

“We’re not going to force a program onto them,” he said, reiterating that they will teach subject matters that peak the interest of participants.

The organizers have loosely outfitted the two evenings with different themes.

Each Thursday focuses on Bible study and discipleship. Sunday evenings encourage praise and worship with music.

“We want them to take ownership

of this,” said Donna Hilley, religious education coordinator.

The hope is that participants will bring instruments and vocal abilities to build up the musical worship evenings, she said.

Food will be provided as part of the fellowship and Bibles are also readily available.

“We would also encourage Soldiers who don’t have any recognizable faith” to attend, Horning said.

“We have an openness of heart for all who will come,” Dunaway added.

Looking for photos of recent events from around the garrison?

Visit the USAG Schweinfurt Flickr page at www.flickr.com/photos/schweinfurtpao.

Sergeants first class prove themselves as leaders, team builders, senior NCOs

by MARK HEETER
Schweinfurt CI Chief

The ranks of the senior noncommissioned officer begin here. These Soldiers have been through study guides and promotion boards. They have led teams, sections and squads.

A centralized board in the Department of the Army selects them individually.

Sergeants first class have proven themselves. And some of them have proven it so well that they are selected to be first sergeants, leaders of companies, batteries and troops.

“It’s a difficult situation for a sergeant first class to be in a first sergeant position,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Ernest Lee, USAG Schweinfurt. “Your leadership style has to change a lot.”

He listens. If you don’t listen as a sergeant first class, you’re going to have trouble. And he asks advice from his seniors.

Command Sgt. Maj. Ernest Lee
USAG Schweinfurt

Sgt. 1st Class Dontonio Roberts, first sergeant for the 172nd Support Battalion rear detachment, has put in his time as a platoon sergeant and company first sergeant.

“I didn’t take it so highly, because I was looking to deploy with the Soldiers,” Roberts said of the moment he was informed of his selection to the rear detachment. “But I went into a briefing, and they made us understand that rear detachment is a tough job also.”

Roberts, who has deployed twice in his 10-year career, has learned quickly the challenges of both being a sergeant

first class as a first sergeant and of handling a battalion rear detachment.

“I thought being downrange was the hardest job,” Roberts said. “But now that I’m back here and have been deployed twice, I get to see both sides and know that the spouses back here and the rear detachment go through a beating. Being deployed is easy,” he said. His ability and willingness to listen and learn are the clear marks of a future command sergeant major, according to Lee.

“He listens. If you don’t listen as a sergeant first class, and you make

the next rank, you’re going to have trouble. And he asks advice from his seniors,” Lee said.

A wheeled-vehicle mechanic by trade, Roberts relishes the role of the noncommissioned officer – especially the first sergeant – as a team builder.

“We’re all one team. We’re all about building that team concept,” he said, adding that he enjoys helping younger Soldiers understand that.

“A good leader can convey that to them, and make them understand the ultimate goal that you’re trying to get to,” he said.

When asked to describe a model

NCO he had in his career, Roberts is quick to describe 1st Sgt. Keevin Fields, with whom he once again serves. Fields is deployed with the 172nd FSB.

“He was also into the team-building concept. He taught me all the things that a Soldier needs, and that a leader needs, at an early age,” said Roberts, who as a young Soldier maintained a unit arms room under Fields.

Having learned more about dealing with families and outside agencies while also leading Soldiers, Roberts calls his current assignment “where it’s at.”

He is still the same NCO, though, at all hours of the day.

“I’m that guy that stays under the radar. But I’m the guy you can wake up at 2300 to deal with Soldiers, and I will jump up like it’s eight o’clock in the morning,” he said.

Video teleconference provides comfort, builds morale

Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
Bavarian News

Over the years, military families have learned to cope with the realities of deployments, sending letters by mail, keeping in touch via the internet and waiting at home for the occasional phone call.

But times are changing.

Since the deployment of the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate) in Nov. 2008, the battalions have upheld their promise of conducting video teleconferences on a monthly basis, giving Soldiers and families the opportunity to see and hear their loved ones, despite the vast distance between them.

“Even though they are so far away, VTC allows us to see things we might normally miss out on and feel closer than we would if we didn’t get to see them,” said Angie Houston, family member of 9th Engineer Battalion.

VTC is a communication system that provides live video and audio that enables conversations between participants.

Every month, each battalion has set up a time for family members to sit in the conference room alone and enjoy fifteen minutes of talk time with

their deployed Soldier.

Houston explained that VTC provides a good outlet for spouses and a perfect opportunity for them to “see” how the other is coping.

“After experiencing our first VTC, I am convinced this is a lifeline for us spouses,” Houston said.

“Having VTCs on a regular basis is a new thing this deployment,” said Brittany Learmonth, Charlie Company, 9th Engineer family readiness group co-leader.

In 2006 when the Dagger Brigade deployed out of Schweinfurt, spouses didn’t have the opportunity to enjoy VTCs as often, only having “two, maybe three within the entire 15-deployment,” Learmonth said.

It’s evident that the monthly opportunity boosts morale and gives Soldiers and their families something to strive towards.

“Everyone looks forward to it. I got to see my son walk for the first time on VTC. For me, I replay that over and over in my head.

“It really makes you feel good,” said 1st Lt. Jon Houston of 9th Engineer Battalion, in an e-mail from Kalsu, Iraq.

For more information about the next VTC, contact your company FRG leader or family readiness liaison.



Pfc. David Palmer, of 9th Engineer Battalion, waits on the video projection screen in the background as his wife Amy and their two children enter the conference room for fifteen minutes of chat time. Video teleconferences prove to be a morale booster for deployed Soldiers and their families.

Youth are ‘Hired!’ with the new apprentice-style DFMWR program

by MARK HEETER
Schweinfurt CI Chief

The U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt Directorate of Family Morale Welfare and Recreation is about to open the door of opportunity for youth, with an apprentice-style program called Hired.

“We’re doing this so they can compete in our fast-paced work world,” said Anthony Hickmon, the DFMWR workforce preparation

specialist who is organizing the new program.

Hired is intended to match participants’ interests with apprenticeships at DFMWR facilities, according to Patricia Lamson, DFMWR partnership specialist.

For example, if a youngster would like to learn more about working with cars, he or she might be offered a 12-week apprenticeship at the award-winning Auto Skills Center.

“It gives them an opportunity

to learn about a whole bunch of different careers,” Lamson said, adding that child care facilities and fitness centers are also likely locations for the youth.

“We are trying to increase participation across the board with (Child, Youth, and School Services) and MWR,” Hickmon said.

“We want to give them great opportunities.”

Precursory classes, such as interviewing skills and basic

professionalism, begin in June, and the hands-on apprenticeships are set to begin June 30, according to Hickmon.

“All of the kids in the Hired program are going to have good basic job-seeking education,” Lamson said.

By design, the Hired program is about teens getting hands-on experience out in the facilities, requiring much cooperation, Hickmon said.

“Everybody has said they will be

on board with the program,” he said, referring to the DFMWR facility and agency managers.

“I haven’t met one person in Schweinfurt who is not on board with the program.”

Hickmon is also building the program with his counterpart in the USAG Bamberg, a logical connection because of the location of the high school, Hickmon said.

For more information, call DSN 354-6732 or CIV 09721-96-6732.



Memorialized

Billy Barber (left) representing the Kitzingen post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, joins Beau and Jesse Timmons, members of the Schweinfurt Middle School Golden Knights, to lay a wreath at the Dagger Brigade memorial during the Memorial Day ceremony on Conn Barracks May 21.

Sgt. Maj. Mark Schindler, U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army operations sergeant major, was the guest speaker at the event and called on the audience to remember not only those Soldiers whom we have lost but also those who have served and continue to serve.

Photo by Mark Heeter



Vilseck High School



Jennifer Agee



Robert Arbolay



Ally Barnett



Benjamin Barry



Robert Bauer



Erik Bidinger



Cassie Blakeney



Johnny Bonar



Christopher Brown



Timothy Bruce



Caitlyn Burger



Shane Calder



Nieko Carr



Lauren Carrol



Scott Carrothers



Jason Chun



Yasmin Coffey



Quartney Cohen



Shamyra Coleman



Courtney Corder



Tanya Cruz



Michael Diaz



Anne Goho



Jannicalouise Gueco



Rodolfo Guerrero



Stephanie Guzman



Sarah Halcomb



Angelo Hall



Meghan Hartz



Nick Heikkinen



Jose Hernandez



Eric Hickman



Tamarla Hollis



Stevi Hood



CJ Horlebein



Aaron Jackson



Curtisa Jones



Nadia Kastner



Josh Keith



Anna Kunst



Daniel Lamp



Phillip Linka



Kyle Lund



Saul Mangual



Phillip Manning



Kimberly Morris



Aida Mougán-Leis



Maurice Newell



Fabien Neidermeier



Breanne Orbe



William Pomares



Angela Prater



John Reynolds



Jessica Rider



Shneice Ross



Peter SanNicolas



Bartley Schwegler



Mary Shoup



Zachary Skills



Tristan Steinman



Alizabeth Sullenger



Kevin Taylor



Kevin Waters



Gabriel Welch



Fabian Williams



Yvette Ybay

Not pictured:
Angela Blevins
Kyle Canale
Natoshia Cohen
Jordan Cooperider
Trevor Pearman



*Congratulations
Falcons!*

Student research erupts at GES Science Fair

Story and photo by
ANDY BAILEY
Special to the Bavarian News

Displays of Chlorophyll, Electromagnetism, Crystals and many more filled the gymnasium of Grafenwoehr Elementary School May 15 as students proudly presented their self-directed

Third-grader Jagger Alexis pours vinegar into dish soap solution located inside his handmade volcano simulating an eruption May 15 at the Grafenwoehr Elementary School Science Fair.



research projects to parents, teachers and peers. Through his original experiment, one young scientist posed the question, “Could someone tolerate more pain while playing a handheld videogame than normal.” The experimenter, fourth-grader Tyler Cooper, had students place their feet in ice cold water then timed them as they played video games.

He concluded that the distraction of the video game allowed people to tolerate the cold water longer. “We wanted our students to demonstrate their understanding of scientific inquiry by posing a question, researching an answer and displaying their results to a larger audience,” explained Cathy Gladden, Gifted Education Teacher and co-sponsor. Another display adorned with crystals of different shapes and sizes asked, “Which crystal growing recipe grows the best?” The research, presented by fourth-grader Nicole Ogborn, used different solutions of borax and salt to come to her conclusions. “She helped us as teachers know which solution to use the next time we grow crystals in our classroom,” Gladden said. The fourth- and fifth-grade overall winner, Erika Schneider, questioned if plants grow better in organic or inorganic soils. A self proclaimed “nature geek,” Schneider showed her potted plants with the organic soils and explained that her research might have implications for farmers and whether or not they should use fertilizers or not. She aspires to be a zoologist and proudly showed the t-shirt with a print of two manatees she adopted. Another display, combining an interest in chemical reactions and volcanoes, was presented by Jagger Alexis. “There are over 90 active volcanoes in the United States,” he stated.

He then pulled out a bottle and poured the contents into his handmade volcano. Slowly the volcano erupted as orange bubbles came out of it. He said mixing vinegar and dishwasher soap makes the volcano erupt. “The Science Expo allowed students an opportunity to explore scientific areas of their interest,” GES Principal Crystal Bailey said. “Students had to write about their results which supports our continuous school improvement goal of writing across the curriculum.” There were three criteria for the projects in the judging:

- Creativity and originality of their scientific inquiry
- Visual representation of the display of their project
- Explanation and presentation of their project

Science Fair winners by grade levels

Kindergarten and first-grade

1st place- Brooklyn Hall
2nd place- Marissa Brennan
3rd place- Brandon Lester

Second- and third-grade

1st place- Joshua Alonzo
2nd place- Mallory Brennan
3rd place- Dexter McDuffie

Fourth- and fifth-grade

1st place- Erika Schneider
2nd place- Jennifer Shimkus
3rd place- Ryan Martin

Summer camp builds physical, social skills

Graf to host Army 10-Miler

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whose deployed moms or dads belong to the Air Force, Navy or Marine Corps. Students having just completed eighth grade are considered an eighth-grader for attendance and may only apply to the middle-school camp sessions. CAC, which will be held in Germany, will focus on basketball, culinary arts, soccer, and track and field. Plus all of the campers will participate in an outdoor adventure program (such as hiking, climbing and canoeing) and healthy living classes. “We want the experience to be educational and entertaining,” Marton said. Dylan Smith, a participant in last year’s sports camp, said he welcomed the sharp coaching, which,

Camp A.R.M.Y. Challenge, the week-long camp which will be held in Germany, includes basketball, culinary arts, soccer, track and field, climbing and canoeing.

Photo by Ray Johnson



he believes, elevated his soccer game. “The instructors really pushed fundamentals. They encourage you to have fun, to loosen up and to not be so hard on yourself.” For all of those interested in applying, a non-refundable \$50 camp registration fee is required when a child is selected to attend the camp. The fee reserves a slot in an assigned session. Central bus pick-up points will provide transportation to the camps; however, Marton stressed that individualized transportation will not be funded, with families being responsible for getting their sons or daughters to central bus pick-up points. Complete information details and application forms - which will be accepted only online - are available at www.mwr-europe.com.rope.com.

IMCOM-E Press Release

A reminder for those aiming to compete on this year’s U.S. Army Europe 10-Miler team: the top finishers from the 2008 qualifying race are still in theater and are training for the 2009 run that will be held June 27 in Grafenwoehr. Joel Steward, who took first place last year in the men’s division with a course record 56.25, said: “I do hope to compete ... I hope to be in good enough shape to finish strong.” The top 12 active-duty Soldiers (six each in the men and women’s divisions) will be nominated to represent U.S. Army Europe during the Oct. 4 Army 10-Miler in Washington, D.C. To be considered, male competitors must finish under 68 minutes, while female runners must finish at 86 minutes or better. Additionally, they will need commander’s approval to be placed on orders, said Jim Mattingly, Installation Management Command-Europe sports and fitness director. The men’s team that represented Europe last year placed third, with the women’s squad placing ninth in their division. While only Soldiers can compete for the U.S. Army Europe team, everyone holding a U.S. Department of Defense identification card, and who are at least 18, may participate in the June 27 race. Last year’s Europe 10-Miler attracted 117 participants. “The hub of activities will be the new fitness center at U.S. Army Garrison

Grafenwoehr,” said Mattingly. “The final stretch will be a one-mile lap near the fitness center, where spectators and fans will be able to cheer the runners on to the finish line.” Free troop billets are available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, contact the USAG Grafenwoehr Recreation Division at DSN 475-9024. If you prefer to reserve lodging at

Grafenwoehr’s Tower Inn, call DSN 475-1700 or civilian (49) 09641-83-1700. Camping at Outdoor Recreation Vilseck is available by calling DSN 476-2866 or civilian (49) 09662-83-2866. Participants can register online through the USAG Grafenwoehr’s Web site at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil, or by calling DSN 475-9024, CIV (49) 09641-83-9024.



Photo by Mary Markos

Runners charge the first hill during the 2008 U.S. Army in Europe 10-Miler qualification run. The 2009 10-Miler race will be held June 27 at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr.

Leading by example inspires IMCOM-E Soldier of the Year

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son, Jason Jr. While little Jason seemed to be enjoying chewing on munchies and a flip flop, Victoria sat pensively. “We were nervous... but confident,” said Victoria, “He worked hard, he studied and, in my opinion, he definitely deserves this.” The competition began at Grafenwoehr earlier this month where participants underwent a comprehensive evaluation of skills ranging from physical fitness to military knowledge, including land navigation exercises, weapons qualification and written exams. The two region selectees now will represent IMCOM-Europe at the Military District of Washington competition scheduled for next

month at Fort A.P. Hill, Va. In attendance at the event were Gen. Carter Ham, U.S. Army Europe commanding general, and garrison commanders, senior enlisted leaders, Soldiers and IMCOM-Europe representatives from throughout Europe. Other competitors included:

Soldiers:

Spc. Justin Bengé - USAG Grafenwoehr
Spc. Josiah Bos - USAG Bamberg
Spc. Travis Kennedy - USAG Wiesbaden
Spc. Jonathan Conerly - USAG Schweinfurt

NCOs:

Staff Sgt. Michael Martin - USAG Grafenwoehr
Staff Sgt. Jay Janish - USAG Bamberg
Sgt. Curtis Bosworth - USAG Baumholder

VFW continues ‘Flags In’ tradition

by **JOE LIVINGSTON**
Special to the Bavarian News

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General John Logan, the National Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic. However, it was not until May 30, 1868 when it was first observed, when flowers were placed on the graves at Arlington National cemetery. In 1948 members of the U.S. Army 3rd Infantry (The Old Guard) started a tradition at Arlington National Cemetery known as ‘Flags In.’ The weekend before Memorial Day every available Soldier of the 3rd I.D. walks through the cemetery and places a flag on each grave. In Germany, there is no Old Guard, but Grafenwoehr Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10692 played their part in honoring our fallen comrades buried in Grafenwoehr and Eschenbach. The week before Memorial Day several members of the VFW Post walked through the cemeteries and placed a flag on the graves of our dearly departed comrades.

Members of VFW Tower Post 10692, along with members of the Vilseck High School Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps, Cub Scout Pack 261, Boy Scout Pack 261 and the local community gathered at the Grafenwoehr cemetery May 25 to honor those that came before us. The ceremony was held at the grave site of our latest fallen comrade, Joseph McCarthy, a World War II veteran. VFW Commander James Holliman presided over the ceremony. Others sacrificed their day-off to participated in honoring the fallen? “If the veterans or the Veterans of Foreign Wars fail to honor our departed comrades, who will?” VFW Senior Vice Commander Steve Hood responded. “It is an honor and a privilege to come to a place such as this to pay our respect to those that sacrificed so much; so we may be here today!” Joe Livingston, the Post adjutant, said. A follow-on ceremony was held at the Flossenburg Concentration Camp to honor two American pilots who were killed during the liberation of the camp and whose remains still rest there.

View photos of recent events from U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr at www.flickr.com/photos/usaggrafenwoehr.